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A MANUAL

OF

BIBLE HISTORY

VOL. II.

The New Testament

BY

CHARLES HART, B.A.

CLASSICAL AND ENGLISH MASTER AT ST. CUTHBERT'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE

AUTHOR OF "THE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH GRAMMAR"

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"—1 ST. JOHN v. 5.

SECOND EDITION

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TO

HIS ALMA MATER,

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ON THE OCCASION OF HER CENTENARY,

THIS VOLUME

IS GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

"But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest."

SHAKESPEARE.

"With thee were the dreams of my earliest love;
Every thought of my reason was thine:
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above
Thy name shall be mingled with mine."

T. MOORE.

LETTER OF HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

Dear Mr. Hart,

I am very glad to know that you are about to publish the second volume of your *Manual of Bible History*. Owing to the many claims on my time at the present moment [by reason of the great Eucharistic Congress], I have not been able to examine your work with any close care; but I feel sure that the second volume will deserve and receive the same commendation which has been accorded to the first.

Wishing you every blessing,

Believe me,

Your devoted servant in Christ,

✠ FRANCIS, ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

Archbishop's House,
Westminster, S.W.,
September 1, 1908.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Encouraged by the welcome given to the Manual of Old Testament History, and by the many requests made for a companion volume on the New Testament, the author is glad to be able to respond to the wishes of his friends, and to offer the present work which comprises, in addition to the Gospel story and the Acts of the Apostles, valuable Appendices embracing a summary of the Epistles, the history of the Evangelists, an account of the New Testament Canon, of the Jewish Sects and Orders, and Contemporary Events in Palestine. No pains have been spared to make the Index as inclusive as possible, and to arrange it in such an order as will prove most useful, not only to the general reader, but especially to the student of history, by enabling him to marshal his facts most systematically. It is therefore hoped that the attempt to supply an expressed want will be found to have been successful.

As in the case of the Old Testament History, he has again used as the foundation of his work Haydock's Douai Bible, with its notes and comments, and has also consulted especially the works of Vigouroux and the Abbé Fouard. He owes much, too, to the Rev. H. K. Mann, author of

The Lives of the Popes; the Rev. G. Wheatley, D.D., *censor deputatus*; and to the Rev. W. Dunne, B.A., author of *The English Ritual Explained*, who have so ungrudgingly helped him with the proof-sheets, and whose valuable suggestions and criticisms he has found of the highest importance. To each and all who have aided him in the work the author would express his deep sense of gratitude.

It may be of interest to those who have in view the Pupil Teacher and the University Local Examinations to know that the Cambridge University Syndicate have recognised the Old Testament Manual as a suitable standard of what is required for the examinations in Scripture for the coming year 1909. For this reason it has been thought well to divide the book into three sections, and to publish them separately for the convenience of those who wish to confine themselves to a particular period, and to save themselves the expense of buying the complete volume.

St. Cuthbert's Grammar School,
Newcastle-on-Tyne,
September 14, 1908.

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* The generally received date of our Lord's birth is fixed at the end of the fifth year before the Christian era.

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A MANUAL OF BIBLE HISTORY

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH THE SUM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

"Do not think that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For amen I say to you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall not pass of the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 17, 18).

The relation of the New Testament to the Old.

In following the history of God's people as recorded in the Books of the Old Testament, the thoughtful reader cannot but have been struck by the fact that the events therein related happened to the Jews "by way of figure," and that the main purpose for which they were written down was to call attention to the coming of Christ, to bear witness to Him as the Saviour of our fallen and sinful race, and to foreshadow the Church that was to be—that is, the people of God throughout all nations. Indeed, the types, and figures, and foreshadows of the Redeemer, which are found running through the Old Testament from beginning to end, are remarkable enough to arrest the attention and to excite the wonder of even the most careless reader. In the Old Testament, as St. Augustine points out, the New lies hidden, and in the New the Old lies open: hence, that which is in very truth the sum of the New Testament, viz., Christ and His Church, is also the sum of the Old. Therefore, we find St. John the Baptist

describing our Lord as the substance of the types of the Law, and as the one true sacrifice for the salvation of the world: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

Nature of the Messianic prophecies.

As a summary of the testimony of the Old Testament to Christ would form the most appropriate preface to the history of the New, we purpose, in the ensuing narrative, to quote at the head of each chapter one or more of the Messianic prophecies, that we may see how strikingly they have been fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and how, when considered together, they give us an accurate likeness of His Divine Person. "No one," remarks Monsignor John Vaughan, "can draw a perfect and accurate likeness of a man who is not yet in existence. God, and God alone, sees the distant future. He, and He alone, can paint a true portrait of one who is to be, but who is not yet made. God sees and knows all things. In fact, all invisible things are to Him not invisible, but stand out clear before Him. Hence, when we find the various prophets drawing, in inspired words, the portrait of Christ, whom they never saw, and when we further note, as soon as Christ appears and manifests Himself, that the portrait is a true one, and an accurate one, we know that God must have shown them the Original, and have described for them the Divine Person of Christ." Now, they succeeded in drawing this marvellous picture of the Man Jesus centuries before He appeared on earth; "and as *they* could not possibly see Him or watch His actions before He 'was made flesh and dwelt amongst us,' the conclusion is forced upon us that they must have been in communication with One who could and did see and know all from the very first; *i.e.*, they must have written what they did under the direct inspiration of an Omniscient Being; and that Being can be no other than Almighty God."

The Promise.

In the very hour of man's fall, God had declared to Adam that One should be born of the seed of the woman who should crush the serpent's head. He therefore set apart, from the race of Sem, one people, of the stock of Abraham, and from that people one tribe—the tribe of Juda—from which, through David, was to be born the Messias.

The Person of Christ foreshadowed.

That mysterious Figure stands forth still more clearly as the years hasten on to the time when realisation was to succeed expectation. As Moses sees Him, He is a Prophet, his equal in power: "I will raise them up a Prophet out of the midst of their brethren, like to thee: and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him" (Deut. xviii. 18). In David's eyes He is a King, his son, and heir to all his glories: "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee, . . . and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build a house to My name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom for ever" (2 Kings vii. 12, 13). His very name is discovered to the Psalmist. This King of all times to come, and of the timeless eternity, is to be called the Anointed of God, the Christ, the Messias (Ps. xliv. 8).

The portrait of Christ as drawn by the Prophets.

One after another the Prophets, separated by long intervals of time and space, added each a line to the limning of this portraiture which foreshadowed the advent of our Lord. They set down all the most salient events in His career, and spoke of His life, and the circumstances of it, just as though they had been actual eye-witnesses. And their descriptions are such as can apply to no one else. Bethlehem is to be His birthplace (Mich. v.); He is to be born of a Virgin (Isa. vii.); while Daniel even mentions the very

time of His birth (Dan. ix.). He is to be preceded by a special herald or messenger (Mal. iii.) whose voice will be heard in the wilderness (Isa. xl.). Another prophet, referring to the massacre of the Innocents, says that Rachel (*i.e.*, Bethlehem, near which city Rachel was buried) shall weep for her children because they are not (Jer. xxxi.). Christ's flight into Egypt and His being called thence are referred to by Osee (xi.). He will preach the Good Tidings to the meek, and heal the contrite of heart (Isa. lxi.). The passages relating to His Passion are most strikingly realistic, and give the minutest details of the sufferings He was to undergo for man's salvation. He shall enter Sion mounted on the foal of an ass (Zach. ix.), and be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zach. xi.) by one in whom He had trusted, and who had eaten His bread (Ps. xl.). He shall be abandoned by His disciples (Zach. xiii.), shall be an object of disdain, the most abject of men, a man of sorrows (Isa. liii.). Even the very place of His wounds is foretold: "They have dug My hands and feet, they have numbered all My bones" (Ps. xxi.); and again: "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced" (Zach. xii.). We are told, too, of the vinegar and gall that were offered Him: "They gave Me gall for food, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink" (Ps. lxviii.); of His words expressing the terrible abandonment He felt as He hung upon the cross: "O God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Ps. xxi.); as well as of the peculiar and special circumstance of His garments being divided by lot: "They parted My garments amongst them, and upon My vesture they cast lots" (Ps. xxi.). Although He shall die and be placed in the tomb, yet shall He become subject to the death of the malefactor only that He may show forth the glory of His Resurrection: "Thou, Lord, wilt not leave My soul in hell, nor wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. xv.). Then, the last of the

Prophets of the Old Law, came Malachias, who not only foretold, as we have already seen, the Precursor of the Messias, but proclaimed the New Sacrifice—the Clean Oblation—that was to be offered in every place, from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same (Mal. i.).

The Prophets all illuminated by the same Spirit.

By thus considering some of the prophecies relative to our Lord's Life and Passion, as given to us by different Prophets, we see how each particular statement harmonises with the whole; "and so admirably does one writer supplement what is said by others, that we cannot but feel persuaded that one and the same Spirit was illuminating them all, and that each had before the eyes of his mind the selfsame Christ and Redeemer. . . . When we read descriptions of events written a thousand years before they come to pass, and accurately and minutely delineated and portrayed, it is impossible to doubt but that God is the Author of such descriptions."

It remains, then, for us to see how this picture of the Messias, so faithfully presented to us by the ancient Prophets, harmonises with that given us by the inspired writers of the four Gospels, who either saw the Master Himself, or heard of Him from His Apostles. And furthermore, by comparing and taking in order these four holy witnesses—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—we shall see how their narratives also, varying as they do in form, intention, and origin, nevertheless do not contradict, but rather explain and confirm each other.

The four Evangelists.

It was the will of Jesus Christ that the history of His life, and the abridgment of the instructions He gave to men, should be transmitted to us by four different Evangelists who are like four witnesses. Two of them—St. Matthew and St. John—depose to what they have seen; while the other two—

St. Mark and St. Luke—testify to what they have learned and heard, the former drawing his authority from St. Peter, the latter from St. Paul; and yet how remarkably do they correspond. All the four follow the impulse of the Spirit, which enables them to discern the truth to which they bear witness, and inspires them with the facts which they are appointed to record. They wrote at different periods and in different places; and it seems to have been the wise design of an all-protecting Providence that they should not follow the same order in their narratives, nor use exactly the same expressions. This apparent disagreement obviates the objection of collusion which, in other circumstances, would undoubtedly have been urged by unbelievers to destroy or weaken the authority of the writers.

The first three of the Evangelists are spoken of as the Synoptical writers, since their narratives agree in general arrangement; and it is to them we must recur to discover the sequence of events in our Lord's teaching. St. John adopted an entirely different plan.

St. Matthew.

St. Matthew thinks of Christ only as the Royal Messias, and begins by showing Him to be the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Promised Seed in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; and for the evident purpose of proving that Jesus is indeed the Messias, the King promised in the Old Testament, he is constantly drawing parallels between the Gospel history and Old Testament prophecy. He wrote mainly for the Hebrew converts, as might be gathered from the fact that, in mentioning Jewish customs and specialities, he allows them to go without further explanation.

To St. Mark, who wrote for the Gentiles, Christ lives "the Son of God." To set forth this fact is the great end of his Gospel. He speaks with the voice of a *mes-*

senger; and, in the opening words of his message, he at once proclaims to his hearers the great subject that he has undertaken to unfold: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, *the Son of God.*" His work begins with the preaching of John the Baptist, as the forerunner of our blessed Lord.

St. Mark.

St. Luke, who also wrote the "Acts of the Apostles," sees Christ as the Saviour of the world. In introducing his narrative he sets before us its practical purpose, viz., the instruction of a convert to Christianity, and begins "to set forth, in order, the things that have been accomplished among us," from the birth of John the Baptist and of Christ Himself. His great aim is to show that God is the God not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles; that He sent His Son to be "a light to the revelation of the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of His people Israel"; and that it behoved Christ to suffer that penance and the remission of sins might be preached in His name to all nations. While St. Matthew traces our Lord's descent from Abraham, through David, St. Luke goes back to Adam, the head of the whole human race.

St. Luke.

St. John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," who also wrote the "Apocalypse" and three Epistles, starts from "a beginning" antecedent to all time, and sets before his readers the Incarnate Word as the manifestation of the Glory of the Father. He would draw men to Christ by making them realise who He is; by showing them that this same Word made Flesh—who was in the beginning with God, and who was God, by whom all things were made—is the Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. Rightly is St. John compared to the eagle, since in his flight he ascends above all sublunary objects, and does not stop till he meets with the throne of the Almighty. In his Gospel, he furnishes us only with striking incidents, evidently selected with

St. John.

the design of setting forth the Divinity of our Saviour in higher relief.

Before passing on to consider, in a new chapter, the "beginning" of which St. John speaks both in the opening of his Gospel and of his General Epistle, and thence to St. Luke, who will himself give us the account of the birth of Him who was the Expectation of all true Israelites, as well of His holy precursor, we shall close this prelude in the words of Canon Sheehan: "The New Law would be more imperfect than the Old, if God did not come closer to His people. But this could only be accomplished by His visible presence. But there could be no visible presence of God, but as Man. God should therefore become Man to reveal Himself fully to the world. This He did in His incarnation. . . .

Verbum caro factum est.

To complete the whole scheme of Divine economy, the presence of God should be maintained. Otherwise, the Christian would have been of less consequence than the Israelite, to whom Jehovah spoke and manifested His presence. But how could the presence of God become a lasting memorial of His love, and yet be veiled in such shadows and accidents that man should have perfect faith, yet not be 'overwhelmed with glory'? Only in one way —the only possible way consistent with the dignity of the Most High—the way His Divine ingenuity discovered for the most stupendous mystery He has wrought—namely, the entombment of the Ever Living and Eternal under the lowliest and most perishable of elements in the ineffable Sacrament of the Altar."*

* "Under the Cedars and Stars," p. 157.

PART I

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS CHRIST: HIS HIDDEN LIFE

"Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just: let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour; and let justice spring up together: I, the Lord, have created Him" (Isa. xlv. 8).

CHAPTER I

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST—BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST ANNOUNCED (B.C. 6)

John I.; Luke I.

"Behold, I send My angel, and he shall prepare the way before My face" (Mal. iii. 1).

In the beginning.

As the Old Testament opens with the words "*In the beginning*," so might the opening words of St. John's Gospel "*In the beginning was the Word*" form a fitting commencement to the New. And just as Moses began his work by recounting the generation of the heavens and the earth, so does St. Matthew, with whose Gospel the New Testament opens, begin with the generation of Him who, in the fulness of time, took upon Himself our human nature to free us from the curse of sin.

The Eternal Word.

"The beginning" spoken of by St. John is the true point from which to regard the New Covenant, establishing, as the words do, the eternity and Divinity of Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word

was God." The eternal Word, the uncreated Wisdom, is none other than the Second Person of the Adorable Trinity, the Only Begotten Son of the Father, of the *same nature* and *substance*, and the *same God* with the Father and the Holy Ghost, yet distinct in person. The Word *was always*, so that it was never true to say, as the Arians falsely maintained, that *He was not.* He *was* when all other things began to have a being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. He gives life to every living creature, and is the Author of grace, which is the supernatural life of the soul. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. This Word, then, this Son of God, co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, at the time appointed by the Divine decrees, was made flesh, *i.e.*, became man, by a true and real union of His Divine Person to our human nature, to a human soul and a human body, in the womb of His Virgin Mother.

We have now to see how the narratives of the four Evangelists fill in the outline drawn for us by St. Paul of the life and work upon earth of the God made Man, who, he tells us, "was manifested in the flesh, was justified in the Spirit, appeared to angels, hath been preached to the Gentiles, is believed in the world, is taken up in glory" (1 Tim. iii. 16).

Nature of the Baptist's mission.

To prepare for His coming upon earth, and to induce men to a lively faith in Him, God chose as His instrument one whom the prophet Malachias had long beforehand foretold when he said: "Behold, I send My angel, and he shall prepare the way before My face." This was none other than John the Baptist, the one referred to by the Evangelist as "the man sent from God as a witness to bear testimony of the Light, that all men might believe through him."

To emphasise the importance of John's mission,

Almighty God sent an angel to announce his birth, which itself appears miraculous, as both his father and mother were too advanced in age to hope for offspring. Of their worthiness to be the parents of such a son we have the testimony of the Sacred Text itself, which tells us that, in the reign of Herod, the king of Judaea, there was a certain priest named Zachary, of the course of Abia,* and that his wife Elizabeth was of the daughters of Aaron; that they were, moreover, just before God and led devout and holy lives, "walking in all the commandments of the Lord without blame."

Zachary and Elizabeth.

Now it came to Zachary's turn to fulfil his week of service in the Temple; and it fell to his lot to burn or offer incense, morning and evening, in that part of the Temple called the *Holy*, where was the Altar of Incense. The people were not allowed to enter into this part of the Temple, much less into the second part of it called the *Holy of Holies*, but remained and prayed in the *Court of the Israelites*, where they waited for the coming out of the priest.

On one occasion while Zachary was engaged in his sacred function, and the people as usual were praying without, there suddenly appeared standing on the right side of the Altar of Incense an angel of the Lord. When Zachary saw him, he was troubled and sore afraid; but the angel said to him: "Fear not, Zachary, for thy prayer is heard: and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt

Zachary's vision.

* By the appointment of David, the descendants of Aaron were divided into twenty-four families, or classes, each of which was to serve in the Temple for a week at a time in rotation. The eighth of these was that of Abia. Only four of the Sacerdotal Families returned from Captivity, but their members were once more distributed into twenty-four classes, the new groups receiving the names of the old courses. The family of Abia was one of those which did not return from Captivity.

call his name John; and thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice in his nativity: for he shall be great before the Lord, and shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And he shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias; that he may turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children,* and the incredulous to the wisdom of the just, to prepare unto the Lord a perfect people." Thus reassured, Zachary said to the angel: "Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." The angel answered: "I am Gabriel who stand before God; and am sent to speak to thee, and to bring thee these good tidings. And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be able to speak until the day wherein these things shall come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in their time." Meantime the people, who were still waiting for Zachary, wondered that he tarried so long in the Temple; but when he came out and could not speak to them, they understood that he had seen a vision. "And he spoke to them by signs, and remained dumb."

The conception of John the Baptist.

During his weekly ministry the priest lodged, apart from his family, in buildings adjoining the Temple; but when the days of his office were accomplished, Zachary returned to his own house, probably at Hebron, or at Jutta, a little further to the south of it. A little later his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months kept herself secluded. Knowing how God had blessed her, she exclaimed in an ecstasy of joy: "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein He hath had regard to take away my reproach among men."

* Mal. iv. 6.

CHAPTER II

THE ANNUNCIATION—THE VISITATION (B.C. 5)

Luke I.

"Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel" (Isa. vii. 14).

"I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (Gen. iii. 15).

Mary and Joseph.

In the sixth month after the angel's visit to Zachary, he was sent on a similar but yet more exalted mission to a virgin named Mary, who lived at Nazareth, a city in Galilee. Mary was espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, a just man, the Scripture tells us, and one who, like herself, was of the family of David. Although of royal descent, Joseph was poor, and had to earn his bread as a carpenter: hence, on one occasion, when our Lord was teaching in the synagogue of His native city, we find His listeners, in their astonishment at His wisdom and at the mighty works He performed, asking: "Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not His mother called Mary?"

Gabriel's mission to Mary.

Although it had been the cherished desire of every Jewish bride that from her, or from some child of hers, the promised Messias should be born, yet it was for the lowly virgin of Nazareth, the humble Mary (*the beautiful*), that was reserved the inestimable privilege, the highest of all dignities that could fall to the lot of a creature, namely, that of becoming the Mother of God. When, therefore, the fullness of time decreed by God for sending His Only-begotten Son into the world was come, the archangel Gabriel was sent from heaven to be the bearer of the glad tidings of Christ's Incarnation and of man's salvation, as also to obtain the consent of Mary to become the mother of the Word made flesh.

Coming into Mary's presence, Gabriel saluted her with the words: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Mary was troubled in spirit at the angel's greeting and trembled with astonishment, wondering what manner of salutation this might be. To reassure her, he at once proceeded to unfold the object of his mission. "Fear not, Mary," he continued, "for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father; and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." To Mary's question, how this should be done, the angel answered: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." To confirm her faith and to show her that nothing was impossible with God, he went on to tell her how, six month's before, her cousin Elizabeth, notwithstanding her age, had also miraculously conceived.

The angelical salutation.

Then did the Blessed Virgin, with all modesty and humility of heart and mind, consent to the Divine will in those simple words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word." And the angel departed from her. At that moment, without ceasing to remain a pure virgin, Mary conceived in her womb the Saviour and Redeemer of the world. The Second Person of the ever Blessed Trinity, still remaining unchangeably the same God, became united to our human nature. Hence may we truly say that God was born, that God suffered and died for us, and consequently that the Blessed Virgin was

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

truly the mother of God, or of Him who is truly God, though not that she was the mother of the Godhead.

The Visitation.

Shortly after the Annunciation, Mary hastened to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who, as we have seen, dwelt far away in the hilly district lying to the south of Judaea. Arrived at her journey's end, she entered Zachary's house and saluted Elizabeth, who no sooner heard her salutation than her infant, as though miraculously endowed with a passing knowledge of the presence of his Redeemer, leaped for joy in her womb. Elizabeth herself, filled with the Holy Ghost, cried out: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken by the Lord." Thus is Mary pronounced blessed not only by the angel Gabriel, but also by Elizabeth. Both of them were inspired by the Holy Ghost; and this not only to the praise of Jesus, but for His sake to the praise of Mary also: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb."

The "Magnificat."

Overflowing with humble gratitude for God's goodness, the lowly Virgin, by Divine inspiration, broke forth into that glorious canticle the *Magnificat:* "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me; and holy is His name. And His mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear Him. He hath showed might in His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their

seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent away empty. He hath received Israel His servant, being mindful of His mercy. As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

How truly prophetical the words, "*from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed!*" and how exactly do we see their fulfilment! for not only did the angel and Elizabeth call her blessed, but all generations have since done so, and shall continue to do so even to the very end of time. St. Bede, commenting on the passage, "*He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid*," remarks: "As death entered into the world by the pride of our first parents, so was it proper that the path to life should be opened by the humility of Mary." Mary abode with her cousin about three months, after which time she returned to her own home at Nazareth.

CHAPTER III

CIRCUMCISION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—AN ANGEL SENT TO JOSEPH—THE NATIVITY (B.C. 5)*

Matt. I.; Luke I., II.

"And Thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and His going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity" (Mic. v. 2).

Elizabeth in due time gave birth to a son. His advent was marked by the great rejoicing of her kinsfolk and neighbours, who, when the child was eight days old, came together to congratulate the happy parents, and to be present at the ceremony of circumcision, when it was also customary to

Birth of the Baptist.

* See Chronological Table.

confer a name upon the child. The relatives would have had him called by his father's name, and expressed surprise when Elizabeth insisted on his being called John, since none of Zachary's kindred had borne that name. At length they agreed to refer the matter to Zachary, who, being still dumb, made signs for writing-tablets to be brought him; whereupon he wrote: "John is his name." All were filled with astonishment; and still more so when, as though in reward for his obedience to the angelic messenger, Zachary's tongue was loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. Those who heard him were struck with fear, and said one to another: "What a one, think ye, shall this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

The "Benedictus."

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Zachary then gave utterance to that sublime canticle of praise and prophecy, the *Benedictus*: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation to us, in the house of David His servant. As He spoke by the mouth of His prophets who are from the beginning: Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us. To perform mercy to our fathers; and to remember His holy testament. The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, that He would grant to us, that being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and justice before Him, all our days. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways. To give knowledge of salvation to His people, unto the remission of their sins. Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient* from on high hath

* The rising *Light*, the rising *Sun*, the *Sun of Justice* (Mal. iv. 2), hath visited us from on high.

visited us. To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death: to direct our feet into the way of peace."

"And the child grew up, and was strengthened in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel."

An angel appears to Joseph.

Mary, meanwhile, had returned to Nazareth, where a grievous trial awaited her. St. Joseph, ignorant of her miraculous conception, was disturbed at a mystery for which he could not account, and had a mind to put her from him privately. While he was sadly pondering this step, and his mind was harassed by anxious doubt, he fell asleep; and as he slept an angel appeared to him in a dream, and said to him: "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son; and thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins." The angel doubtless reminded him, too, of the ancient prophecy of Isaias concerning the birth of the Messias; for, as St. Matthew continues, "All this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet: 'Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel.'" So pleased then was God with the modesty, reserve, and silence on the part of Mary and Joseph, that He even sent His angel to dissipate Joseph's doubts, and to explain to him the mystery of the Incarnation. Thus consoled and enlightened by the heavenly messenger, St. Joseph rose up from sleep, and continued to remain with his holy spouse as the protector of her chastity, and to secure her from calumnies in the birth of the Son of God.

Though Mary and Joseph had their home in Nazareth, and it seemed as though this city must witness the birth

of the Messias, yet had the prophecy of Micheas long before declared that out of Bethlehem should He come forth that should be the ruler in Israel. How, then, was this to be brought about?

The decree of Augustus.

By a special providence of the Almighty, a decree was issued by Augustus Caesar, the Emperor of Rome, for a census of "the whole world." The inhabitants of the whole Roman Empire, and of all its tributary kingdoms, Judaea included, were thus commanded to repair to the cities of their ancestors, there to be enrolled. This enrolment no doubt was made for the purpose of apportioning the taxes that were to be paid annually to the Imperial treasury. Now, Mary and Joseph, being both of the family of David, were obliged to go to Bethlehem, the city of David, where, according to the predictions of the Prophets, the promised Redeemer was to be born.

Christ is born at Bethlehem.

In obedience, then, to the Imperial decree, the two set out on their long journey, which, to the delicate Virgin, must have been most trying, consisting as it did of some eighty miles through a hilly country in the depth of winter. When they reached Bethlehem, they sought in vain for admission at the inns, which were already crowded with travellers more wealthy than they; and to their inquiry for a lodging they were constantly turned away with the reply that there was no room for them. Compelled at length to abandon all hope of obtaining more suitable accommodation, they had to content themselves with no better shelter than that afforded by a poor stable, which was occupied, as is generally believed, by an ox and an ass. Here, exposed to the chilly blasts of a winter's night, Mary gave birth to the Saviour of the world, and, wrapping Him up in swaddling clothes, laid Him in the manger. Who is not lost in astonishment at the wonderful mystery, at the amazing

condescension of the God-man, who, from His birth, took upon Himself such abject poverty to teach us the little value we ought to set on all human grandeur? The Son of God is born into the world, and His first bed is a manger from which the cattle are wont to feed.

Angelic announcement to the shepherds.

But while the new-born infant Jesus was thus brought to so low a stage of humiliation, outside, in the darkness, a heavenly messenger was sent to announce to the shepherds in the fields, that in Bethlehem was born the Messias. We are told that while "they were watching and keeping the night-watches over their flocks," an angel of the Lord suddenly stood beside them, and the brightness of God shone about them, so that they feared with a great fear. But the angel bade them fear not; "For behold," he said, "I bring you tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people; for this day is born to you a SAVIOUR, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger." Then there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and proclaiming: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." No sooner had the heavenly vision vanished from their sight than they said one to another: "Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us."

Adoration of the shepherds.

Hastening on their way they came to the stable, and found the Divine Infant lying in the manger, as the angel had described to them, and Mary and Joseph kneeling in adoration over Him. They saw, and believed that He who lay there in such great poverty was their King, the Son of God; and they returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen. They thus became witnesses of Christ's birth, and spread the glad tidings to others who

"wondered at those things that were told them by the shepherds." Meanwhile Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.

CHAPTER IV

THE CIRCUMCISION, AND THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE (B.C. 4)

Luke II.

"And the DESIRED OF ALL NATIONS SHALL COME: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Agg. ii. 8).

"And He shall be a sanctification to you: but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to the two houses of Israel, for a snare and a ruin to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Isa. viii. 14).

The Circumcision.

On the eighth day after His birth the Divine Child, sinless though He was, and the God of all sanctity, was nevertheless submitted by His parents to the painful and humbling Law of Circumcision, a law instituted to be the figure of baptism. By submitting to this law, our Divine Saviour manifested to the whole world the reality of His human nature, proved that He was truly of the seed of Abraham, and set us a lesson of humility and obedience by observing a law instituted for sinners, which could not bind Him by whom all sins are remitted. The Jews then could have no excuse for rejecting Him on the ground of His being uncircumcised.

Jesus, Saviour.

As in baptism now, so, as we have already seen in the case of the Baptist, in circumcision names were given. The Divine Infant received the name of Jesus (*Saviour*), the name brought down from heaven by Gabriel, a name expressive of the great purpose for which He had come into the world; for, as St. Paul says, there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved (Acts iv. 12).

When the forty days from the birth of our Saviour were

complete, Mary, in conformity to the Law of Moses, repaired to the Temple for the twofold purpose of her own purification, and of presenting her Son to God in the same manner as every mother among the Jews had to offer her first-born son. The blessed virgin mother stood in no need of the ceremony of Purification, but humbly submitted herself to it as her Son had to that of Circumcision. Grace raised her above the Law, but her humility subjected her to it. A further command, too, of the Jewish Church was observed by her with no less humility and fidelity. To commemorate the Exodus and the fate of the first-born among the Egyptians, the Law ordained that at the Presentation the child was to be redeemed with a price, by the offering of a lamb; or, in the case of the poor, of two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, one for a holocaust, the other for a sin-offering (Lev. xii. 8).* Owing to her poverty, Mary presented the offering of the poorer class.

The Presentation.

At this time there lived in Jerusalem an aged man named Simeon, just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, for the coming of the Messias, and the consequent redemption of mankind. The Holy Ghost, we read, was in him, and had given him an inward revelation that He should not die before he had seen the Lord's Anointed. Guided by the same Spirit, he had come into the Temple at the very time when Mary and Joseph brought in the Child Jesus "to do for Him according to the Law." Receiving the Divine Infant into his arms, he blessed Him, and in an ecstasy of joy exclaimed: "Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace; because my eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a Light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the Glory of Thy people Israel."

Simeon's canticle, the "Nunc Dimittis."

* See vol. i., p. 106.

Mary and Joseph were filled with wonder at the things which were spoken concerning the Child.

Simeon's prophecy.

But Simeon blessed them and said to Mary: "Behold this Child is set for the ruin, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed."

Meaning of the prophecy.

Christ indeed came for the redemption and salvation of all men; so that when Simeon prophesies that He is set for the ruin of many, he merely foretells what is to happen in consequence of man's wilful blindness and obstinacy. It is not that God had sent His Son for the fall of anyone, but that many, by their own perverseness, in wilfully refusing to receive and obey Him, would take occasion of falling. By *a sign that shall be contradicted* is signified that Christ and His doctrine would be, as it were, a mark against which the Jews would direct the darts of their malice, as St. Paul remarks: "We are to some the odour of death unto death, but to the others the odour of life unto life" (2 Cor. ii. 16). In speaking of Mary's soul pierced by a sword of sorrow, Simeon figuratively expresses the grief the Blessed Virgin was destined to undergo as she stood by the cross of her dying Son. The thoughts of many hearts would be revealed about the Child, when some, in spite of His poverty and lowliness, would believe in Him, and accept Him for the Messias for His own sake; and others would reject Him when they saw He was not going to give them that temporal glory the Jews imagined He would bring them.

Another witness that Jesus was the Messias was Anna, a woman venerable for her age, but still more for her piety. We are told that she had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, that is, had been married seven years, but that from the time of her husband's death she had

remained a widow. At this time she was 84 years of age; yet, despite her great age, she departed not from the sacred precincts of the Temple, but remained serving God night and day in fasting and prayer. This Anna was a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser. Hardly had Simeon ceased speaking when she came into the Temple, and recognising the Child whom he had just blessed, gave praise to the Lord her God, and spoke of Jesus to all who looked for the redemption of Israel.

Anna, the prophetess.

CHAPTER V

ADORATION OF THE MAGI—FLIGHT INTO EGYPT —MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS (B.C. 4)

Matt. II.

"The kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts" (Ps. lxxi. 10).

"And the Gentiles shall walk in Thy light, and kings in the brightness of Thy rising" (Isa. lx. 3).

"A voice was heard on high of lamentation, of mourning, and weeping, of Rachel, weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted for them, because they are not" (Jer. xxxi. 15).

Soon after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of King Herod the Great, there appeared in Jerusalem Wise Men from the East, who, we may conclude, from the mention they made of His star, had been forewarned, either by prophecies which were circulated through the countries in which they dwelt, or by Divine revelation, of the advent of the Messias; for they inquired: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to adore Him."*

The Magi.

* They might have been acquainted with the prophecy of Balaam, which had announced the coming of the Messias by the emblem of a *star* which was to rise out of Jacob. (See vol. i., p. 167.)

The star in the East.

Whether the star appeared before the birth, or about the very time of the birth of our Saviour, or whether it guided the Wise Men during the whole course of their journey from the East to Jerusalem, we know not, for we read nothing more in the Gospel than that it appeared to them *in the East*, and that they saw it again upon their leaving Jerusalem to go to Bethlehem.

Herod and Jerusalem alarmed.

Not only Herod, who was a foreigner and had obtained the sovereignty over the Jews by violence, and who, as a tyrant, had good reason to tremble on every occasion, but all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were as much afraid of revolutions and bloodshed as of the wrath of the king, were troubled and filled with alarm at the astounding account of the Magi. The king at once assembled all the chief priests and the Scribes, and made diligent inquiry of them where, according to prophecy, the Messias was to be born. The answer was clear and unequivocal: "In Bethlehem of Juda; for so it is written by the prophet: And thou, Bethlehem, the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come forth the Captain that shall rule My people Israel" (Mic. v. 2). Accordingly, having privately called the Wise Men to him, he elicited from them the exact time of the star's appearing to them, and, professing a desire to worship the new-born King, he sent them to discover His abode.

Adoration of the Magi.

They went on their way, and, behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them. Filled with joy, they followed its guidance, until at length it stood over the place where the Child was. They entered, and found Jesus with Mary, His mother; and, falling down, they adored Him, and, opening their treasures, they presented to Him their offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Their

gifts are regarded as possessing a mystical meaning. By *gold* was signified the tribute they paid to Him as their *King;* by *incense* that He was *God;* and by *myrrh*, with which the dead were wont to be embalmed, that He was also a *mortal man.* In making Himself known to the Gentiles, Jesus began thus early the extension of that spiritual kingdom which was to embrace the whole world, and which had been so long beforehand foretold by the Royal Psalmist: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (Ps. ii. 8). And again, in Isaias, we read: "I will set a sign among them, and I will send . . . to the Gentiles . . . to them that have not heard of Me, and have not seen My glory" (lxvi. 19).

The Magi return home.

After they had performed their acts of adoration, the Wise Men, believing in the sincerity of Herod, and without any suspicion of his evil designs in regard to the new-born King, thought of returning to him immediately, but were warned by God in a dream not to appear again before the king, but to go back to their own country by another road.

The Epiphany.

Although the Church celebrates the Epiphany on the 6th of January, it seems more probable that the Wise Men came to Bethlehem about the time of the Purification rather than thirteen days after Christ's birth. We know that they found Jesus at Bethlehem, where His blessed mother was to remain till the time of her purification expired. Now, had they come so soon after Christ was born, and been directed by Herod to go and make diligent inquiry at Bethlehem, which was only some five miles from Jerusalem, it can scarcely be imagined that so suspicious and jealous a prince as Herod was would have waited almost a month for their return

without searching for the new-born King. Hence the command of Herod and the flight into Egypt must have followed close upon the visit of the Magi—a supposition which necessitates our fixing the Purification at a time which either preceded, or at least closely followed, their visit. It is even likely that the events which occurred at the Temple on the occasion of the Purification may have reached the king's ears, and caused him further alarm, which thus urged him to give the cruel and inhuman order for the massacre of the Innocents.

Flight into Egypt.

But how easy it is for the all-wise God to frustrate the deepest designs of weak mortals! One night, soon after the departure of the Magi, the Lord sent an angel to Joseph with the command: "Arise, and take the Child and His mother, and fly into Egypt; and be there until I shall tell thee; for it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child to destroy Him." Joseph tarried not; but rising up at once, he proceeded faithfully to fulfil the angel's injunction, and, with Jesus and Mary, began the long and toilsome journey. From the time of Jeremias, many Jews had dwelt in Egypt, and it is most probable that the Holy Family, after their arrival, remained in some part of the country where those of their own nation had settled, such as at Heliopolis or at Alexandria.

Massacre of the Innocents.

For a time Herod impatiently awaited the return of the Magi; but when he discovered that they had evaded him and had departed by another route, his fears increased, and his rage knew no bounds. Now, at length, did he throw off the mask and show what his real intentions had been. He had made diligent inquiries of the Magi concerning the star, and, assuming that its first appearance coincided with the birth of the Child, he issued the barbarous order for all male children not more than two years old, in and around Bethlehem,

to be put to death. He never for a moment doubted that the unknown Infant must needs be included in the general massacre. His cruel order was put into execution with the utmost brutality. Despite the piteous entreaties and agonising cries of the distracted mothers, their infants were savagely torn from their arms and butchered before their very eyes. In the massacre of the Holy Innocents, and in the unavailing cries of their helpless and unhappy mothers, the prophecy of Jeremias, under the image of Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, was carried out to the very letter. Rachel, who was buried at Bethlehem, is represented as mingling her mournful cries with those of the afflicted women; while a voice of lamentation and wailing is described as reaching even to Rama, which is generally supposed to have been a village built on the heights overlooking Bethlehem: "A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."*

Death of Herod.

Herod was not long destined to survive his innocent victims; for, as we learn from the Jewish historian, Josephus, a loathsome disease seized his whole body and consumed him little by little. An untimely rumour of his death having reached Jerusalem, the golden eagle which he had placed, contrary to the laws of the Jews, over the great gate of the Temple was torn down by two zealous scribes named Judas and Matthias. They were seized by the captain of the Temple, and, together with some forty young men who had assisted them, were brought into the presence of the dying tyrant, who lay in his superb palace at Jericho. "And when," continues Josephus, "he asked them, first

* From the earliest times the Holy Innocents have been honoured by the Church as martyrs, and a festival is celebrated in their honour on December 28.

of all, whether they had been so hardy as to cut down the golden eagle, they confessed they had done so; and when he asked them by whose command they had done it, they replied at the command of the law of their country; and when he further asked them how they could be so joyful when they were to be put to death, they replied, because they should enjoy greater happiness after they were dead." Maddened with rage, Herod immediately gave orders for them to be burnt alive. His own end, so impatiently waited for, came at last. He died miserably, and was succeeded by his eldest son Archelaus.

CHAPTER VI

RETURN FROM EGYPT—JESUS AMID THE DOCTORS (A.D. 8)

Matt. II.; Luke II.

"And I called My Son out of Egypt" (Osee xi. 1).

The return of the Holy Family.

On the death of Herod, an angel of the Lord again appeared to Joseph and said: "Arise, and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead who sought the life of the Child." With ready obedience Joseph undertook his journey; but when he heard that Herod had been succeeded by Archelaus, who inherited the cruel disposition of his father, afraid of exposing to danger the sacred Treasure committed to his care, he avoided Judaea, and directed his steps to Nazareth, in Galilee. Thus was fulfilled what had been said by the Prophets: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

The reason, no doubt, why Jesus is called "of Nazareth," and not "of Bethlehem," is because, coming there so young

and being brought up there, He was generally supposed to have been born there. Hence we have Him spoken of as "the Galilean"; and people argued from that circumstance that He was not the Messias, nor even a prophet, saying, "Art Thou also a Galilean? Search the Scriptures, and see that out of Galilee a prophet riseth not" (John vii. 52). Again, in Nazareth the Word was made flesh, though in Bethlehem He was born into the world; and our Lord, in addressing Saul, gives Himself the same title: "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest" (Acts xxii. 8).

Jesus of Nazareth.

In Joseph's humble house at Nazareth we lose sight of Jesus until He is twelve years of age, and are simply told that He grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom, and that the grace of God was in Him.

The only event recorded of Him before His baptism is the one given us by St. Luke of His being lost for three days in Jerusalem. During the great Feast of the Passover, all the men were required by the Law to repair to the Temple; and, although the women were not so bound, yet was it considered a pious and laudable practice for them to go with the men. And when Jesus was twelve years old, we find Him accompanying His parents to the Feast. On their return homewards, Mary, finding that Jesus was not in her company, imagined that He was with St. Joseph, whilst St. Joseph believed that He was with His mother, since, when people went up to the Temple from remote parts, it was the custom for the men to go in one company, and the women in another, while the children went in either company indifferently. Nazareth was three days' journey from Jerusalem; and when, at the end of the first day's return journey, the caravan halted for the night, Mary and Joseph were overwhelmed with astonishment and grief to discover that the Divine Child was

Jesus lost for three days.

missing. In vain they sought for Him among their kinsfolk and friends. At length, believing that He must have been left behind in Jerusalem, they began sorrowfully to retrace their steps thither.

Jesus found in the Temple.

Not finding Him on the way, they continued their fruitless search for two days and two nights through the Holy City itself, among all the inns and in all the streets. Only on the third day, as they entered the Temple, did they discover Him seated amidst the Doctors of the Law, hearing them and asking them questions, while all who listened to Him were astonished at the wisdom He displayed. When His parents saw Him thus occupied, they wondered; and Mary said to Him: "Son, why hast Thou done so to us? behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." "Why did you seek Me?" He answered. "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" thus showing that not St. Joseph, but only God was His Father. Mary and Joseph, we are told, understood not the word that He spoke unto them; but Mary kept in her heart all that she saw and heard. Jesus returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to them; and He increased in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.

He was subject to them.

The only circumstances that the Evangelists relate of our Saviour from the age of twelve to the age of thirty is that He was subject to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. He whom all things obey was subject to His parents. Thus did the Son of God, by His example, teach us humility and the great lesson of ready obedience to the directions of those whom God has placed over us. When we are told that He increased in wisdom we do not mean that He was wiser at any period of His life than He was at the moment of His conception, but that He chose to manifest increasing signs of wisdom

as He increased in years. In the same manner, also, He increased in grace by displaying as He advanced in age the gifts of grace with which He was endowed, and by this excited men to the praise of God from the consideration of the favours God had bestowed upon Him; and thus He conduced to the honour of God and the salvation of men.

The carpenter's Son.

It is generally believed that St. Joseph died during this period, *i.e.*, between the visit of our Lord to the Temple in His twelfth year and the beginning of His public ministry, and that our Lord must have shared the humble lot of His foster-father, and worked as a carpenter to help to supply the needs of the Holy Family. This, moreover, is most probable from the laudable custom that existed among the Jews of requiring every man to learn some trade or occupation: hence, subsequently, we find His countrymen thus speaking of Him: "Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary?" (Mark vi. 3).

PART II

PREPARATION FOR THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great Light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death Light is risen" (Isa. ix. 2).

"Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda" (Jer. xxxi. 31).

CHAPTER VII

MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—JESUS IS BAPTISED (A.D. 27)

Matt. III.; Mark I.; Luke III.

"The voice of one crying in the desert: Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the wilderness the paths of our God" (Isa. xl. 3).

"And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, and He shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord" (Isa. xi. 2, 3).

We are told by St. Luke that in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (A.D. 26), when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea,* Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, Philip, his brother, tetrarch of Ituraea and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilina, under the High Priests Annas and Caiphas, "the word of the Lord was made unto John the son of Zachary." The sceptre had passed from Juda, Judaea itself was only a province of the

* Archilaus had been deposed by the Emperor Augustus (A.D. 6), and Judaea made a Roman Province.

Roman Empire,* and now at length the fulness of time had come when He, the Expectation of nations, was to manifest Himself to Israel.

Preaching of the Baptist.

In order to prepare the minds of the Jews to receive the Messias, John, who had since his early years, made his abode amid the wild hilly district that stretches from Hebron to Jerusalem, and whose food consisted of locusts† and wild honey, now appeared in the country about the Jordan, baptising, and preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins. At this time he must have been thirty years old; for he, as well as our Lord, in conformity with the Jewish Law, would not enter upon any public ministry before that age. Coming forth, then, he preached to the multitudes who crowded to hear his discourses, the substance of which has been given to us very concisely in these words: "Do penance; for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17). Such was the coming of the precursor of our Lord, long before spoken of by the prophet Isaias: "A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths" (xl. 3). Moreover, to teach us how every hindrance to salvation must be removed, the same prophet continues: "Every valley shall be filled; and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain: and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." The fame of his preaching attracted people from all directions, from all the country about the Jordan, from the smaller towns in Judaea, and from Jerusalem itself.

St. John, who is to be regarded as a second Elias, even

* The Emperor Augustus died A.D. 14; but Tiberius had been associated with him in power since A.D. 12.

† The locusts mentioned here are probably a sort of grasshopper found in hot countries, and are numbered among eatables (Lev. xi. 22). St. Jerome mentions them as a food of the common people.

in his very dress recalled the person of that prophet. There hung from his shoulders a garment of camel's hair, and he wore a leathern girdle about his loins; and in the fourth Book of Kings (i. 8), we read of Elias that he was a hairy man with a girdle of leather about his loins. The Jews expected that Elias would come in person to prepare the way of the Messias; but John the Baptist was raised up by God in the spirit and power of Elias to precede the first coming of Jesus Christ, as Elias in person is to precede the second coming of this Divine Saviour.

The Baptist a second Elias.

Among the Jewish sects, many members of which came to hear John's preaching, were the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The latter were a profane body of men who made a jest of the resurrection, of the existence of spirits, and of the immortality of the soul; while the former, their declared adversaries, were a more religious sect who pretended to be exact observers of the Law, and also of a great many traditions which they held, or pretended to hold, from their forefathers. They are regarded as rival sects who claimed the exclusive privileges of the Covenant with Abraham.

Pharisees and Sadducees.

When John saw that many of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees came to him to be baptised, knowing their hypocrisy, he thus sternly rebuked them: "Ye brood of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruit worthy of penance. And think not to say within yourselves: We have Abraham for our father; for I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that yieldeth not good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire." And the people asked him: "What then shall we do?" John answered: "He that hath two coats, let him give to

John reproaches the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

him that hath none; and he that hath meat let him do in like manner." The publicans* also came to be baptised, and asked: "Master, what shall we do?" But he said to them: "Do nothing more than that which is appointed you." And the soldiers also asked him, saying: "And what shall we do?" John replied: "Do violence to no man, neither calumniate any man; and be content with your pay."

John taken for the Messias.

As it was then generally believed among the Jews, from the testimony of the ancient Prophets, that the time for the appearance of the Messias was come, many reasons might have induced the people to think that John was the Christ. There were the wonders that took place at his conception and birth, the excellence of his preaching, his mortified life, and the novelty of his baptism. Many, indeed, began to entertain the idea that he was really the Messias; but when word of their belief reached the ears of John, he at once humbly acknowledged his own inferiority to the coming Messias, and the inferiority of his baptism by water to the baptism of the Spirit. His baptism, he informed them, was only calculated to lead men to a penitential life, and not to give them true justice; but He who was to come after him was stronger than he; for by His baptism He would give them the remission of their sins; He would baptise them in the Holy Ghost, and in the fire of His Divine charity which He would shed into their hearts to purify them from sin: "I indeed baptise you with water unto penance, but there shall come One mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose: He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire; whose fan is in His hand, and He

* By "publicans" is here meant the collectors of the taxes that were raised to pay the Roman tribute. Among the Jews they were despised as unpatriotic, and hated for their extortion.

will purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

Jesus is baptised by John.

Not to lose this opportunity of teaching humility by placing Himself among sinners, as if He stood in need of the baptism of penance for the remission of sins, Jesus came from Nazareth to the Jordan unto John, to be baptised by him. But John stayed Him, exclaiming: "I ought to be baptised by Thee, and comest Thou to me?" Jesus answered: "Suffer it to be so now [*i.e.*, in this present dispensation of My humiliation]; for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice." John resisted no longer; and when Jesus, after being baptised, came out of the water, lo, the heavens were opened; the Holy Ghost in a visible form—in the form of a dove—descended upon Him, and at the same time there came a Voice from heaven, which said: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "In that instant," writes the Abbé Fouard,* "John understood all that we revere in the vision—the Trinity made manifest to man for the first time; the Father in the Voice falling from the heavens, the Son in Jesus, the Holy Ghost in the Dove, symbol of grace, whose reign was now begun in the world. Then, too, he saw the waters sanctified by the presence of Christ, receiving of Him power to purify souls in baptism. Then he saw Jesus proclaimed the Son of God—that Son of whom the Psalmist sang, begotten in the bosom of God before the day-star and the sunrise were conceived" (Ps. cix. 3).

The adorable Trinity.

Nature of John's baptism.

The baptism of John was not a Sacrament, but an external profession of penance, to which the baptised added an external or oral confession of sins: "And they were baptised in the Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. iii. 6). This was meet,

* "The Christ, the Son of God," vol. i., p. 113.

because such as were baptised by John sought of him also instruction how they were to amend their lives. It is naturally expected of whoever asks for similar advice that he should expose his defects. Thus it is that patients act with their physicians. But, although they confessed their sins, and were baptised, the baptism did not, it would seem, remit sins. There are some indeed who hold the opposite opinion, but against these may be urged the words of John himself: "I baptise you with water unto penance, but He who is to come after me . . . shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost" (Matt. iii. 11). This he said to show that he did not baptise with the Holy Ghost, without which there is no remission of sin. John's baptism, then, was only figurative of the cleansing of the heart. Those who came to him were exhorted to do penance, for the kingdom of God was at hand; and thus by their weeping and confessing their sins, and by their penitence, they gave an efficacy to John's baptism which it had not in itself. His baptising seems to have been taken by the Jews for some token of the Messias, since we find them asking him: "Why then dost thou baptise, if thou be not Christ" (John i. 25)? Doubtless, too, they would have in their minds Ezechiel's prophecy regarding Christ's baptism: "I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness, and I will cleanse you from all your idols" (xxxvi. 25).

CHAPTER VIII

JESUS IS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL (A.D. 27)
Matt. IV.; Mark I.; Luke IV.

"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deut. vi. 16).

Immediately after His baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert, probably to the hill which now bears the name of Quarantana (40 *days*), a little to the west of Jericho, to merit for us by His victory over the enemy of our salvation force to conquer him also ourselves; and to prepare, by fasting, retirement, recollection, and prayer, for the carrying out of His public ministry, which may be said to have had its official beginning in His baptism. By His conduct in the desert He teaches all that were in future times to be called to His ministry how they are to prepare for their work by retiring into solitude, where they may converse with God in prayer, and draw down the blessing of Heaven upon themselves and their undertaking. Jesus abode in an entire solitude, "alone with the wild beasts," and fasted rigorously forty days and forty nights. At the end of His prolonged fast "He was hungry, and the devil came to tempt Him." The forty days spent by our Saviour in the wilderness bear a striking resemblance to the forty days' fasting and retirement of Moses on Mount Sinai before he published the Law (Deut. ix. 9), and the forty days' fast of Elias when on his way to Horeb (3 Kings xix. 8); and the likeness of the Mediator of the New Covenant to the mediator and the illustrious champion of the Old becomes the more significant from the subsequent appearance of Moses and Elias with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Our Saviour in the desert.

In the hunger of our Lord, Satan saw a favourable

opportunity to tempt Him to sensuality, and to discover by stratagem if He were truly the Son of God, as was declared at His baptism. He appeared, therefore, to Him, and would have Him change by a miracle the stones into bread, with which He might appease His hunger and recover His strength. The tempter does not say *if Thou be the Son of God* "*pray*" that these stones be made bread, which he might have said to any man; but "*command*," effect by Thine own authority, that this come to pass. If Christ had done this, Satan would have instantly concluded that He was the Son of God, since only God could effect such a miracle. But it was our Lord's intention to overcome the proud fiend by humility rather than by power; and thus, if the first Adam fell from God by pride, the New Adam has taught us to return to Him by humility. Accordingly our Blessed Saviour answered him from the Book of Deuteronomy (viii. 3): "It is written: Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." Man consists of soul and body: his body is supported by bread, his soul by the word of God: "Lex est cibus animæ."

Christ's first temptation.

The devil next tried to tempt our Saviour to vainglory. He therefore led Him to the Holy City, where he set Him on one of the pinnacles of the Temple. In what manner this was done the Sacred Text does not say; but, while some think that the devil only conducted Him from place to place, St. Gregory is of opinion that Christ permitted Himself to be taken and transported by him through the air. Placing Jesus in a position from which He could see the crowds who thronged the courts of the Temple, he said to Him: "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it is written," he added, quoting, in a wrong and forced sense, from the Psalms: "That He hath given His angels charge

The second temptation.

over Thee, and in their hands shall they bear Thee up, lest perhaps Thou dash Thy foot against a stone" (Ps. xc. 11, 12). Jesus answered by citing another passage of Scripture: "It is written: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Deut. vi. 16).

The third temptation.

To try our Saviour a third time, Satan, hoping to overcome Him by ambition, took Him up into a very high mountain, and showed Him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world and their magnificence. This the devil may have done by some kind of representation, or by showing a part, and by words setting forth the rest. The father of lies here promised what was not his to fulfil: "All these will I give Thee, if falling down Thou wilt adore me." By quoting yet a second passage from Deuteronomy, Jesus vanquishes the tempter: "Begone, Satan! for it is written. The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve" (vi. 13). Thereupon the devil, having exhausted all his artifices, left Him, and angels came and ministered to Him. St. Luke remarks that the tempter departed from Him *for a time*, that is, until His Passion, in which he again most grievously tormented Him by the hands of impious persecutors, until that desolation upon the Cross, when for the last time he was to attack Jesus with all the fury of despair. Hence we are to learn that, after we have resisted temptation with success, we are not to think ourselves secure, but to prepare for fresh combats: "He that shall endure unto the end, he shall be saved" (Mark xiii. 13). God and His angels witness our struggle, ready to crown our victory: "And you are they that have continued with Me in My temptations" (Luke. xxii. 28).

The history of the various temptations to which our Saviour allowed Himself to be subjected, as related by St. Matthew, is exactly the same as that given by St. Luke, except that St. Luke transposes the last two. And

when we come to examine these three temptations, we find that they comprise the three principal sources of sin: "For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John ii. 16).

The humiliation of our Saviour.

Who can conceive the terrible humiliation it must have been to our Lord to see Himself thus tempted by His arch-enemy? "The thought that that spotless Tabernacle of His body should be not merely touched by the foul fiend, but surrendered to his pleasure, to be borne by him up to the very summit of God's Sanctuary, this has dismayed the loving hearts of many a Christian from the days of St. Cyprian even to to-day, and with him, many interpreters of the text have held that this scene was all a vision; but the more commonly held opinion is that Jesus really submitted to these outrages. He who delivered over His limbs to the agents of hell to be lashed and tortured, to be covered with spittle and stretched upon a cross, may well have permitted the Prince of Darkness to exercise his awful powers upon His sacred Person."*

* Abbé Fouard, "The Christ," vol. i., p. 125.

CHAPTER IX

THE BAPTIST'S TESTIMONY—FIRST DISCIPLES OF JESUS—THE MARRIAGE AT CANA OF GALILEE

John I., II.

"I will raise them up a Prophet out of the midst of their brethren, like to thee; and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak all that I shall command Him" (Deut. xviii. 18).

"And I will set up ONE SHEPHERD over them, and He shall feed them, even My servant David" (Ezec. xxxiv. 23).

LIKE the Baptist, our Saviour did not begin His public ministry till after He had attained the age of thirty: "*Incipiens, quasi annorum triginta.*" Having left the wilderness, Jesus passed a few days on the banks of the Jordan, thus affording His holy precursor an opportunity of bearing repeated testimony to Him and to His Divine mission.

Deputation from the Sanhedrim to John.

In the meantime, John continued to preach and baptise, and his disciples daily to increase. The severity with which he censured the Pharisees, the decisive manner in which, having first spoken of the "Coming One," he now pointed out Jesus, the report that a Voice from heaven had marked out One from among the penitents, filled the members of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem with doubt as to whether John himself might not be the Messias, or perhaps the prophet who was to announce Him. They accordingly sent out a deputation of priests and Levites to question him with a view to having their doubts resolved. To the first question of the envoys, "Who art thou?" John confessed, and denied it not; and he confessed that he was not the Christ. "What then?" they asked. "Art thou Elias?" He answered that he was not; because in person he was not; although our Saviour says that he was Elias, meaning

in spirit and office only (Matt. xi. 14). "Art thou the prophet?" they urged, alluding to the one whom Moses had foretold to them (Deut. xviii. 18). "No," replied John. Yet Christ tells us he was a prophet and more than a prophet. In the ordinary acceptation, only they were called prophets who foretold things to come. John, then, with truth, as well as humility, could say he was not a prophet, being sent, not to foretell the coming of the Messias, but to point Him out as being already come. "Who, then, art thou," they persisted, "that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself?" To this John replied: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias" (xl. 3). Even yet they were not satisfied, but demanded: "Why then dost thou baptise, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet?" "As for me," answered John, "I baptise with water; but there hath stood One in the midst of you whom you know not. The Same is He that shall come after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose." Thoroughly disconcerted, his questioners withdrew, nor did they venture any further inquiry. This took place in Bethania, over against Jericho, at one of the fords of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

John's testimony to Jesus.

The next day John saw Jesus coming towards him, and seized the occasion to let the Jews know by divers testimonies who He was. "Behold," he exclaimed, "the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world. This is He of whom I said: After me there cometh a Man who is preferred before me, because He was before me. I saw the Spirit coming down as a Dove from heaven, and He remained upon Him. And I knew Him not; but He who sent me to baptise with water said to me: He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining,

He it is that baptiseth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw; and I give testimony that this is the Son of God." It was only a being like Christ, in whom the Divine and the human natures were united, that could effectually take away the sins of the world. As man He was able to suffer for our sins, and as God to offer the infinite atonement they required.

Andrew and John.

On the following day, as John stood with two of his disciples and saw Jesus pass by them, he said: "Behold the Lamb of God." The disciples, one of whom was Andrew, a native of Bethsaida, situated on the Sea of Galilee, and the other, as is universally believed, St. John the Evangelist, were so struck with the words that they parted company with their master to go after Jesus, and became His first disciples. When Jesus turned and saw them following Him, He asked: "What seek you?" They said to Him: "Rabbi [*i.e.*, master], where dwellest Thou?" Jesus answered: "Come and see." They went with Him and saw where He abode, and stayed with Him that day. Yet they did not continually remain with Him as His disciples till He called them as they were fishing, when they quitted their boat, their nets, their fishing, and all they had in the world.

Simon Peter.

After leaving our Saviour, Andrew went to seek his brother Simon, and having found him, brought him to Jesus, saying: "We have found the Messias." Jesus, fixing His gaze upon Simon, said: "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas," a Syro-Chaldaic word meaning Peter or Rock, thereby designing to make him the chief or head of His whole Church, and signifying, according to St. Cyril, that on him, as on a rock most firm, He would build His Church.

The day after this, when Jesus, accompanied by Peter,

Andrew and John, was preparing for His departure to Galilee, He met with Philip, who, like Peter and Andrew, was a native of Bethsaida. Our Saviour invited him also to accompany Him. Philip not only responded to the call himself, but went eagerly to seek his friend Nathaniel, whom we afterwards know as the Apostle Bartholomew, a native of Cana in Galilee. Full of joy, Philip said to Nathaniel: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus the Son of Joseph of Nazareth." Nathaniel was struck with astonishment, not thinking it consistent with the predictions of the Prophets that the Messias, who was to be the Son of David, and to be born at Bethlehem, should come from a city in the despised province of Galilee. "Of Nazareth?" he replied; "can anything of good come from Nazareth?" Philip's only answer to his objection was: "Come and see." Nathaniel obeyed the summons, however, and accompanied his friend. As soon as Jesus saw Nathaniel coming towards Him, He said to those about Him: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." In his surprise at thus finding himself known, Nathaniel asked: "Whence knowest Thou me?" Jesus answered: "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Then did Nathaniel exclaim: "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God! Thou art the King of Israel!" "Because," continued our Saviour, "I said to thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, thou believest: greater things than these shalt thou see. Amen, amen, I say to you, you shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Philip and Nathaniel, or Bartholomew.

On the third day of His journey northwards, or the second after the call of Nathaniel, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee to which Jesus was invited with His disciples; and Mary, His mother, was also present at the

marriage. It is supposed that at this time St. Joseph was dead, since in all the rest of the history of Jesus not a single word occurs respecting him. Probably the unlooked-for arrival of many extra guests was the cause of a painful embarrassment to the bride and bridegroom, for during the festivities the wine ran short. When Mary noticed this, she was distressed, and, out of compassion for the newly married couple, mentioned the fact to her Son, whose Divine power and charity she well knew. His answer—"Woman, what is it to Me and to thee? My hour is not yet come"—serious though it was, yet full of respect and affection, did not discourage Mary, who said to the waiters: "Whatever He shall say to you, do ye."

The marriage at Cana.

Her confidence in her Son received its merited reward. In the room were six large stone pitchers, which were intended for the purpose of religious purification, and which were capable of containing two or three measures, or firkins, apiece. At a word from Jesus, the waiters filled these with water to the brim. "Draw out now," said our Saviour, "and carry to the chief steward of the feast." Now, when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, unconscious of the miracle that had been wrought, he called the bridegroom, and said: "Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. But thou hast kept the good wine until now." This, the first miracle which Jesus performed in public, served to manifest His glory, and to confirm the belief of His disciples in Him.

Our Lord's first public miracle.

Christ's first recorded miracle was a kind of transubstantiation, in its change of water into wine; just as the first miracle of Moses, the mediator of the Old Law, when he was sent to the Jews, was itself a kind of transubstantiation (Exod. iv.), as also was the first performed

by Moses and Aaron in the presence of King Pharao (Exod. vii.).

By His presence at the marriage in Cana, Christ sanctified the bond of marriage, and even, as we have seen, deigned to honour it with His first public miracle. This sacred bond was destined to be in His Church not only a sacramental union, but the type which He Himself chose of the mystical union which was to subsist between Him and His Church for ever. "As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it. . . . This is a great Sacrament; but I speak in Christ, and in the Church" (Eph. v. 32).

PART III

FIRST YEAR OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS—FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND PASCH IN ITS COURSE

A.D. 27-28

"At the first time the land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtali, was lightly touched; and at the last the way of the sea beyond the Jordan of the Galilee of the Gentiles was heavily loaded" (Isa. ix. 1).

CHAPTER X

THE MONEY-CHANGERS DRIVEN FROM THE TEMPLE—NICODEMUS

John II., III.

"For the zeal of Thy House hath eaten me up" (Ps. lxviii. 10).

THE marriage at Cana concludes what may be termed the introduction to our Lord's public ministry, or His immediate preparation for the preaching of the Gospel; and now we come to what was really His public life, an epoch most fittingly begun in Jerusalem and at the Feast of the Passover.

The traders driven from the Temple.

Soon after the miracle recorded in the last chapter, Jesus, with His mother, His brethren, and His disciples, went down to Capharnaum, a town situated to the north-west of the Sea of Galilee. He did not remain there many days, however, before departing for Jerusalem, as the Pasch of the Jews was at hand. Entering the Temple, and seeing within the sacred precincts those that sold oxen and sheep and

doves for the sacrifices, and the money-changers seated at their tables, He was filled with zeal for the honour and respect due to His Father's House, and making a scourge of little cords, He drove out the traffickers, the sheep also and the oxen. Nor did He spare the money-changers. All of them He drove without the gates, their tables He overturned, and scattered their money upon the floor. To those who sold doves He turned and said: "Take these things hence, and make not the House of My Father a house of traffic." Great must have been the astonishment of His disciples on beholding the indignation of Jesus and the multitude flying before Him; but now they remembered that it was written: "The zeal of Thy House hath eaten Me up."

Jesus gives the authority for His act.

How could a carpenter's Son, whose Divinity was yet wholly unknown to the people, succeed in expelling so great a multitude from the Temple? Was there not something Divine in His whole conduct and appearance which deterred all from offering resistance? Does not the Evangelist seem to insinuate this by putting into the mouth of our Saviour words which mark Him out as distinctly the Son of God: "The House of My Father"? Yet His act did not go unchallenged. The Jews, evidently grasping the inference of His words, asked: "What sign dost Thou show us, seeing that Thou dost these things?" Jesus answered: "*Destroy* this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They said to Him: "Six and forty years was this Temple in building, and wilt Thou raise it up in three days?" Now, this He said of the Temple of His body. The disciples cherished this deep and marvellous saying in their hearts, and, after He was risen from the dead, perfectly understood its meaning when they called to mind how it was written of Him: "I have slept and have taken My rest; and I have risen up, because the Lord

hath protected Me" (Ps. iii. 6). His words, however, were taken in another sense by many of His listeners, and three years later were brought against Him in a changed form by false witnesses, who accused Him of saying: "*I am able to destroy* the Temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it" (Matt. xxvi. 61), and who by their unjust accusations succeeded in bringing about the prophecy contained in them.

Many believe in Jesus.

Jesus remained in Jerusalem till the Feast was over, and by His many miracles won numerous converts. "But He did not trust Himself to them, because He knew all men." He knew their weakness, their inconstancy, their unsteadiness. He knew they would abandon Him on the first occasion, and that His Passion, His cross, His doctrines, would be a subject of scandal.

Nicodemus.

Among the number of those whom His miracles drew to Him was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. At this time Nicodemus was weak in faith, and did not wish to endanger himself by coming to our Saviour in the open day. He therefore came by night, and said to Him: "Rabbi, we know that Thou art come a Teacher from God; for no man can do these things which Thou dost, unless God be with him." Jesus replied: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." To the question of Nicodemus: "How can a man be born again when he is old?" our Saviour made answer: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"; thus showing that, unless men be born again by a spiritual regeneration in God, all knowledge about Him will not be spiritual but carnal, nor will they understand or conceive the glory which is in Him. "The Spirit," continued our Saviour, "breatheth where He will, and thou hearest His voice; but thou

knowest not whence He cometh, nor whither He goeth. . . . Amen, amen, I say to thee, that We speak what We know, and We testify what We have seen, and you receive not Our testimony. If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not, how will you believe if I shall speak to you heavenly things?" Then, to teach us that He had a being before He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He descended from heaven, that, when He was made man and conversed with men on earth, He was at the same time in heaven, He resumed: "No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven."

The Brazen Serpent a figure of Christ crucified.

He next spoke of the Brazen Serpent raised up to the gaze of those who were bitten by the fiery serpents in the desert as a figure of His own crucifixion on Calvary, and averred that, as the afflicted Israelites were cured by looking upon the Brazen Serpent, so would His followers be saved by gazing with a lively faith on their crucified Lord: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert (Num. xxi. 9), so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved by Him. He that believeth in Him is not judged; but he that doth not believe is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: because the Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the Light; for their works were evil. Every one that doth evil hateth the Light, and cometh not to the Light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doth truth cometh to the Light, that his

works may be made manifest, because they are done in God."

The disciples of Jesus baptise.

After the Feast of the Passover, Jesus, quitting the city, went with His Galilean disciples into the country districts of Judaea, where He drew after Him many faithful followers, who were baptised, not by Himself, but by His disciples (John iv. 2). St. Chrysostom is of opinion that this baptism given by our Saviour's disciples did not at all differ from the baptism of John, and that both were used to prepare the people for Christ; but many interpreters think otherwise, and regard it as the Sacrament which regenerates the soul.

Further testimony of John.

At this time John also was baptising in Enon, close by Salem, and near the borders of Galilee and Samaria, because of the plenteous supply of water to be found there. A question having arisen between some of the disciples of John and the Jews concerning purification, they came to John to ask how it was that He to whom he had given testimony was drawing all men to Himself. John answered: "You yourselves do bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy, therefore, is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that is of the earth [*viz.*, *John himself*], of the earth he speaketh. He that cometh from heaven [*viz.*, *Christ*] is above all; and what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth. . . . He that hath received His testimony hath attested by His seal that God is true; for He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth in the Son hath life everlasting; but he that

believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth in him."

In this we see the humility of the Baptist. He about whom they inquire is the Bridegroom, while he himself is the friend of the Bridegroom sent before to announce His coming to the bride—*i.e.*, to collect for Him a Church, and rejoicing because of the Bridegroom's voice. Far from letting envy rankle in his heart, he would even have been happy to see all his followers desert him to run to Christ.

CHAPTER XI

HEROD CASTS THE BAPTIST INTO PRISON—THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

Matt. XIV.; Mark VI.; Luke III.; John IV.

"You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains" (Isa. xii. 3).

The Baptist reproves Herod and is imprisoned.

Hitherto we have seen the Baptist preaching and baptising in the desert by the Jordan. When, however, it came to his ears that Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, regardless of the scandal he was giving, had married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, who was still living, we find him suddenly appearing in Galilee, and coming before Herod, whom he boldly reproved for his wickedness. Fearlessly proclaiming the law of God, he said to him: "It is not lawful for thee to have her." Now, Herod revered John; but, instigated by the shameless Herodias, and probably by the Pharisees whose hypocrisy John had rebuked, he seized him and cast him into prison. Herodias, indeed, was bent on John's destruction, and for her sake Herod would have put him to death, were it not that he feared the people, who esteemed John as a prophet.

Jesus leaves Judaea for Galilee.

After John had been cast into prison, Jesus entered more publicly on His mission; and, as He was about to occupy the place of His precursor, He left Judaea, and chose Galilee as the first scene of His preaching, the place assigned to Him by the ancient Prophets. The Pharisees, whose hatred of John, as we have seen, was doubtless the chief cause of bringing about his arrest, could not fail to regard Jesus with still greater fear and alarm, seeing that He drew even a much larger concourse of disciples after Him.

Jesus at Jacob's Well.

In going from Judaea to Galilee, our Saviour took the direct route northward, and passing through the country of Samaria, He came to a city named Sichar, situated near Jacob's Well. It was about the sixth hour when Jesus, wearied with His journey, sat by the well while His disciples went into the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman.

He had not been there long before a woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her: "Give Me to drink." The Samaritan woman regarded the Stranger with a look of surprise, for she knew by His speech and His apparel that He was a Jew; and the Jews hated and would have no communication with the Samaritans. "How dost Thou," she inquired, "being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman?" Jesus answered: "If thou didst know the gift of God, and who He is that saith to thee: Give Me to drink: thou perhaps wouldst ask of Him, and He would give thee living water." By His words, our Lord referred to the gift of Divine grace; but she understood Him literally of such water as was there in the well, and said: "Sir, Thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep; from whence then hast Thou living water? Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his chil-

dren, and his cattle?" "Whosoever drinketh of this water," answered our Saviour, "shall thirst again; but he that shall drink of the water that I will give him, shall not thirst for ever. But the water that I will give him shall become a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." Still failing to grasp the deep significance of His words, or the idea of the spiritual water of grace, she expressed a longing for water after drinking which she would never thirst, and would have Him disclose the whereabouts of such a spring. "Sir," she said, "give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw."

Jesus reveals Himself as the Christ.

Changing His discourse, our Saviour showed that He was acquainted with her past life, and exposed to her the evil of the life she was then leading. "Go, call thy husband," He said, "and come hither." "I have no husband," at once replied the woman. "Thou hast answered well," He rejoined, "in saying, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband. This thou hast said truly." Confused at finding herself thus exposed, she tried, in her embarrassment, to turn the subject by taking refuge in a question of doctrine. The Samaritans had built a temple on Mount Garizim, in which place, and not at Jerusalem, they would have had all persons adore. Curious to hear what Christ would say of these two temples, and of the different worship of the Jews and the Samaritans, and hoping, moreover, that her question would sufficiently interest a Jew to turn his attention from herself, she continued: "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a Prophet. Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore." "Woman," He said to her, "believe Me, that the hour cometh, when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, adore the Father. You adore that which you know not: we adore that which we know; for Salvation

is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth" (without being confined to any one temple or place). The words of our Lord, "*the hour now is*," seem to have vaguely reminded her of the Messias, of whom even the Samaritans at this time appear to have been in expectation, as we gather from her reply: "I know that the Messias cometh (who is called Christ); therefore when He is come, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her: "I am He who am speaking with thee."

The disciples, coming up at this moment, wondered that He discoursed with the woman, especially as she was a Samaritan. But the woman, leaving her water-pot, hastened back into the town, calling to every one whom she met: "Come, and see a Man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done. Is not He the Christ?" Filled with astonishment at her words, many hurried out of Sichar in the direction of Jacob's Well, to see who it was of whom she spoke.

The spiritual harvest.

In the meantime the disciples prayed Jesus to eat; but He said to them: "I have food to eat which you know not of." Noting their surprise, He continued: "My food is to do the will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work. . . . Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest. He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labour: others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours." The great harvest of souls was approaching, when Christ, after teaching men the way of salvation, was to send His Apostles to convert all nations. They succeeded to the labours of the Prophets, but with greater advantages and success; and

to this is applied the common saying that *one soweth and another reapeth.*

Jesus remains two days at Sichar.

We are told that many of the Samaritans believed in our Saviour because of the word of the woman; and at their earnest entreaty He remained two days in their city. On His departure they said to the woman: "We now believe, not for thy saying; for we ourselves have heard Him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world."

CHAPTER XII

BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL FROM GALILEE—SECOND MIRACLE AT CANA—JESUS IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH (A.D. 27)

Matt. IV.; Mark I.; Luke IV.; John IV.

"The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me: He hath sent Me to preach to the meek, to heal the contrite of heart, and to preach a release to the captives, and deliverance to them that are shut up: to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Isa. lxi. 1, 2).

Jesus returns to Galilee.

After the two days spent at Sichar, Jesus resumed His journey from Samaria to Galilee, and was heartily welcomed by His countrymen, who had witnessed all that He had done in Jerusalem during the Feast. He again went to Cana, where He had changed the water into wine, and in all probability to the same family He had honoured by His presence at the marriage feast.

Healing of the ruler's son.

Knowledge of His arrival there having come to the ears of an officer of Herod's court, who resided at Capharnaum, and whose son was lying dangerously ill, this courtier set off at once for Cana, and, having found our Lord, besought Him to come down

without delay to Capharnaum, and heal his son. That our Saviour might point out to the Galileans in general that the real object of His mission was not to work signs and wonders, but to win them to a change of heart and to a lively faith in Him, He at first answered the courtier reprovingly: "Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not." The man was not discouraged; but, although seemingly impatient for the granting of his petition, he displayed an earnest faith as he repeated his simple and touching entreaty: "Sir, come down before that my son die." Our Lord was pleased with the man's faith, but chose to put it to a further test before granting his petition; and instead of yielding to the full request to go down to Capharnaum and heal his son, He merely said to him: "Go thy way, thy son liveth." The man believed the word of Jesus and went his way. He did not reach Capharnaum till the next day; but as he drew near to his house, he was met by his servants, who greeted him with the glad tidings of his son's recovery. On inquiring of them the hour wherein the child grew better, they answered: "Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him." The father found that it had happened at the very moment when our Lord had spoken the word; "and himself believed and his whole house."

Jesus at Nazareth.

The fame of Jesus went out through all the country. He passed through Galilee preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and healing all manner of diseases and infirmities among the people. He taught in the synagogues on the Sabbath-days, and on a certain Sabbath, when He was in the synagogue at Nazareth, and His townsfolk were assembled to hear Him, He rose up to read from the Book of Isaias which had been handed to Him. Unfolding the Book, He found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; wherefore He hath anointed Me;

He hath sent Me to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart, to announce deliverance to the captives and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of reward." Then, when He had folded the Book, He returned it and sat down; and the eyes of all were upon Him.

Jesus is driven out of Nazareth.

But when He pointed out to them that the words of Isaias were that day fulfilled in Himself, they were struck with astonishment, and said one to another: "Is not this the Son of Joseph?" "Doubtless," remarked Jesus, "you will say to Me this similitude: Physician, heal Thyself: as great things as we have heard done in Capharnaum do also here in thine own country";—a similitude that might with reason be applied to such as attend to the concerns of others while at the same time they neglect their own. He then went on to show them that even the Prophets had been despised by their own countrymen, but had been welcomed by strangers, "a sorrowful statement of the truth," remarks Dr. Smith,* "that they to whom the Gospel is brought nearest are the least ready to receive it; that the prophet is rejected, even where he *ought* to be first accepted, 'in his own country' where he is best known, as Jesus was already known in Galilee by His miracle in Cana, nay, as He elsewhere adds, in 'His *own house*.'" "Amen, I say to you," continued our Lord, "that no prophet is accepted in his own country. There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias, when heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there was a great famine throughout all the land; and to none of them was Elias sent, but to a widow at Sarepta of Sidon. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the Prophet; and none of them was cleansed

* "Student's New Testament History," p. 191.

but Naaman the Syrian." Embittered by these words, the assembly rose up in a fury, and seizing Jesus, hurried Him along to the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, with the intention of casting Him down; but here some superhuman power held fast their arms, and Jesus passed through the midst of them. Leaving Nazareth He went to Capharnaum, where He henceforth took up His abode. "He came unto His own," writes St. John in the opening chapter of his Gospel, "and His own received Him not."

Jesus abides at Capharnaum.

Our Lord's choice of Capharnaum as the chief seat of His ministry was in complete accordance with prophecy. It stood on the north-western shore of Lake Genesareth, on the borders of Zabulon and Nephtali; and the glory reserved for it had long beforehand been pointed out by Isaias (ix. i. 2), as St. Matthew (iv. 15, 16) distinctly states: "The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephtalim, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles*: the people that sat in darkness saw great Light; and to them that sat in the region of the shadow of death Light is sprung up."

CHAPTER XIII

JESUS AT CAPHARNAUM—MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES—FIRST GALILEAN CIRCUIT

Matt. IV., VIII.; Mark I.; Luke IV., V.

"Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows" (Isa. liii. 4).

THE scene of our Saviour's labours was now the margin of the lake, variously termed the Sea or Lake of Galilee, of Tiberias, of Genesareth, and of Cenereth. He was accus-

* This was the northern portion of Galilee, which received this name on account of its many heathen settlers.

tomed to preach in the neighbourhood of Capharnaum; and on one occasion, when He was standing by the Lake of Genesareth, such numbers gathered round Him to hear His word that, the better to be able to address so large a multitude, He sought a position from which to speak to them on the lake itself.

Jesus by the Sea of Galilee.

He saw, drawn up on the shore, two fishing-boats, the owners of which were engaged some little distance off in washing their nets. One of the boats belonged to Simon Peter, and into this Jesus entered, desiring its owner to push out a little from the land. He then sat down and, from the boat, taught the multitude assembled on the shore. By this, say the ancient commentators, is shown that the Church was figured by the barque of Peter, and that in it is the word of God, and a permanent authority prefigured by Christ's sitting down therein.

Jesus teaches from Peter's barque.

When Jesus had finished His discourse, He said to Peter: "*Launch out into the deep*,* and let down your nets for a draught." Peter rejoined: "Master, we have laboured all the night and have taken nothing; but at Thy word I will let down the net." No sooner had they done this than they enclosed such a multitude of fishes that their net began to break as they drew it in, and they were obliged to call to their partners, the owners of the other boat, to come to their aid. They came; and so great was the number of fishes they drew up that the ships were filled and were almost sinking. On seeing this, such was the excess of Peter's humility that he judged himself unworthy even of the presence of Christ, and fell down upon his knees, saying: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Jesus

Miraculous draught of fishes.

* St. Augustine interprets these words as spoken of distant nations to whom the Gospel was afterwards delivered.

said to him: "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

Call of Simon and Andrew, James and John.

On this occasion He called Peter and Andrew, his brother, to become His constant followers; for it was His intention, as He had just declared to Peter, to make of them fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed Him. In like manner He called their partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who had already returned to the shore and were mending their nets. And they, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with his hired men, also followed Jesus. Thus, says St. Jerome, did Jesus, to prove that the establishment of His religion was heavenly, and to humble the pride of man, make choice, not of orators and philosophers, but of poor ignorant fishermen. "The weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong" (1 Cor. i. 27).

The demoniac healed.

Together they entered Capharnaum, and on the following Sabbath Jesus taught in the synagogue. All were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught as one that had authority, and not as the Scribes. While He was yet speaking, a poor demoniac, who had forced his way through the crowds and was standing in the midst of the synagogue, suddenly interrupted with a shriek: "Let us alone: what have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know who Thou art, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit that was torturing the man, and bade him hold his peace and go out of him. Immediately Satan, crying out with a loud voice, threw the man down on the ground and departed from him. All were amazed at what they had seen and heard, and said one to another: "What thing is this? What is this new doctrine? for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

And the fame of Him was spread forthwith through all the neighbouring parts of Galilee.

Healing of Peter's mother-in-law.

From the synagogue Jesus proceeded to the house of Peter, whose wife's mother lay ill of a raging fever. The friends of the sick woman were grouped about her bed, and as the Master entered, they earnestly besought Him on her behalf. Jesus drew near, and standing before her, commanded the fever, and it left her: whereupon she rose up and ministered to them.

That same evening after sunset, which marked the end of the Sabbath-day, when word of this other miracle had been noised through the city, people brought to Him their sick and many that were possessed by devils; and He healed them, but would not permit the evil spirits to declare that they knew Him to be the Christ. These things He did, writes St. Matthew, that the words of Isaias might be fulfilled: "He took our infirmities, and bore our diseases."

First Galilean circuit of Jesus.

Next morning, whilst Capharnaum was still hushed in sleep, Jesus left the city and went into the desert place, where He wished to pray alone. Disappointed at not finding Him in the early hours of the day, the crowds sought Him on every side; and when at last His disciples found Him, they told Him how every one was looking for Him. "Let us go," He answered, "into the neighbouring towns and cities, that I may preach there also; for to this purpose am I come." He accordingly went throughout Galilee, preaching in the synagogues, and healing the sick and the possessed. The fame of His teaching spread beyond the borders of Galilee, even through all Syria, and great multitudes came to Him from Decapolis, and the region beyond the Jordan, and even from Jerusalem and Judaea.

CHAPTER XIV

JESUS HEALS A LEPER AND A PARALYTIC—CALL OF LEVI OR MATTHEW

Matt. VIII., IX.; Mark I., II.; Luke V.

"I am He that blot out thy iniquities for My own sake, and I will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 25).

A leper cleansed.

In one of the cities to which Jesus came, a man stricken with leprosy ran to Him, and casting himself at His feet implored for mercy. The poor sufferer, conscious of his own unworthiness, but full of faith, and placing his trust in God, cried out: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Touched with the man's faith, and moved with pity, our Lord stretched forth His hand and laid it upon him, saying: "I will: be thou cleansed"; and immediately the leprosy departed from him. Then, to show that He had come not to destroy but to fulfil the Law, Jesus bade him go and show himself to the Priest, and make the offering appointed by Moses "for a testimony unto them" (Lev. xiv. 4). Contrary to the injunction of our Saviour, bidding him tell the miracle to no one, the man went forth and published the news of his cure on every hand; and, in consequence of the multitudes who flocked to Him from all sides, Jesus withdrew into the wilderness.

The paralytic cured.

His return, however, to Capharnaum, after a few days, was marked by a still more striking incident in the healing of the paralytic. When His arrival became known, such numbers crowded to Him to hear His word that when a sick man, who was too infirm to leave his bed, was carried to the house where He was, the four men who bore him were unable to approach the door. Not discouraged, however, they ascended to the

flat roof of the house, and, after removing some of the tiles, let the sick man down into the room where our Saviour was. When Jesus saw their faith, He was moved to show mercy, and said to the man: "Be of good heart, son: thy sins are forgiven thee." But some of the Scribes and the Pharisees who were present said within themselves: "He blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Jesus, who knew their thoughts, said to them: "Why do you think evil in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say: Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say: Arise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins: Arise," He said, turning to the man sick of the palsy, "take up thy bed, and go into thy house." Immediately the man rose up, and, taking the bed on which he had lain, went away in the sight of all. And they that saw it were filled with admiration at the miracle, and glorified God who had given such power to man. "Wonderful things," they said, "have we seen this day." Thus does Christ, by forgiving sins of His own power, clearly prove His Divinity to all; and, to show that He has power on earth to forgive sins, He afterwards performs a miraculous cure.

Call of Matthew.

When Jesus passed thence to the lake, He saw a man, Matthew, or Levi, the son of Alpheus, sitting in the custom-house, where, as a publican, he was collecting the taxes; and He said to him: "Follow Me." Without a moment's delay Matthew rose up and promptly obeyed the call. Soon afterwards he made a feast at his house, to which he invited our Saviour and His disciples, and at which also were present many publicans and sinners. The Scribes and the Pharisees, affecting to be scandalised at seeing Jesus seated with publicans and sinners, complained to His disciples. Jesus heard their complaints, and said: "They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. Go then

and learn what this meaneth: *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:* for I came not to call the just but sinners to repentance."

Questions about fasting.

To the further charge made against His disciples that they fasted not, whereas the disciples of John and of the Pharisees did fast, Jesus answered: "Can you make the children of the bridegroom fast whilst the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then shall they fast in those days." He also taught them by the parable of new wine in old bottles, and of new cloth sewn upon an old garment. He compares His disciples to an old garment and to old bottles, and an austere mode of life to new cloth and new wine; and argues that, if we do not put new cloth on to an old garment because it tears the garment the more, nor put new wine into old bottles because by its fermentation it would easily break them, so, in like manner, His disciples, who had been accustomed to a less rigid mode of life, were not at once to be initiated into an austere discipline, lest they should sink under its difficulties, and relinquish the pursuit of a more austere life. "But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved. And no man drinking old [wine] hath presently a mind to new; for he saith: The old is better."

PART IV

SECOND YEAR OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS—ITS COURSE FROM THE SECOND TO THE THIRD PASCH

A.D. 28—29.

"Behold, My Servant, I will uphold Him: My Elect, My Soul delighteth in Him: I have given My Spirit upon Him, He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor have respect to person, neither shall His voice be heard abroad. The bruised reed He shall not break, and smoking flax He shall not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth" (Isa. xlii. 1-3).

"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord" (Isa. liv. 13).

CHAPTER XV

SECOND JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM—THE CURE AT THE POOL OF BETHSAIDA—JESUS VINDICATES HIS DIVINE AUTHORITY

John V.

"The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a PROPHET of thy nation, and of thy brethren, like unto me: Him thou shalt hear" (Deut. xviii. 15).

Jesus goes up to Jerusalem.

THE return of the Passover called Jesus for the second time to Jerusalem. It is generally understood that St. John refers to this Passover, the second from the commencement of Christ's ministry, in the opening words of the fifth chapter of his Gospel: "After these things there was a festival day of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." Near the Sheep Gate was a pool which went by the name of Probatica, or, in Hebrew, Bethsaida, surrounded by five porticoes, covered and arched, for the convenience of the sick and the cripples who remained waiting for the water

to be set in motion; for an angel of the Lord went down at a certain time into the pool and the water was moved, after which the first to enter was cured of whatever infirmity he lay under.

Cripple cured at the Pool of Bethsaida.

On a certain Sabbath our Lord came near to the pool, and saw there a man who had been lame for thirty-eight years. Doubtless with the intention of exciting the poor man to a lively faith and hope, He addressed him and asked whether he wished to be made whole. "Sir," he replied meekly, "I have no one, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond; for whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me." Jesus said to him: "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." At that instant the man found himself healed, and did as he was ordered, though it was the Sabbath-day. When the Jews blamed him for this, he told them that He who had healed him bade him do so. But who it was who had done so he knew not till Jesus, finding him in the Temple, said to him: "Sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee."

Jesus charged with breaking the Sabbath.

Upon this the man went, not out of malice, but out of gratitude, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had cured him. It was this that led the Jews to entertain for the first time the idea, which they never abandoned, of putting our Saviour to death. Already they had begun to regard Him with suspicion, and this news served but to intensify their anger. Desirous, therefore, of bringing an accusation against Him, they charged Him with having broken the Sabbath. Jesus answered them: "My Father worketh until now, and I work," thus putting them in mind that, though it be said that God rested on the seventh day from the work of creation, yet His rest is not inaction. With truth may it be asserted that He works always, in His providence and in His grace, in preserving and continually governing the world, and that it is at all times lawful to

do good. He declared that He did all things that the Father did; that He worked with Him, being one and the same in nature and substance with Him; nay, that, even as Man, He did nothing but what was conformable to the will of His Father, and therefore that they need not fear that He broke the Sabbath.*

Jesus vindicates His Divine authority.

The Jews found in His words a new motive for their hatred, and sought the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, thus making Himself equal to God. Far from contradicting this conclusion, our Saviour joined issue with them upon its truth. He proclaimed openly who He was, and claimed for Himself three Divine attributes: the power of restoring spiritual life to such as were dead in sin, the power of judging or of withholding eternal life from those who would not accept spiritual life at His hands, and the power of awaking and raising up the dead from the grave and calling them before His own judgment-seat: "When they that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."

Christ adduces four witnesses.

To establish such lofty claims as these, He appealed, seeing that they would not believe Him, to four witnesses which came from God; first, to the testimony of John the Baptist, who at divers times witnessed that He was the Messias, the Lamb of God come to take away the sins of the world; secondly, to the testimony of His Eternal Father, particularly at His baptism; in the third place, to the works and miracles wrought before their eyes, and at the same time foretold by the Prophets; and lastly, to the Scriptures which they searched, and which He bade them search diligently, as they also bore witness concerning Him.

* See also p. 73.

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Jesus then gave the Jews the reasons why they did not receive Him and His doctrine, nor believe in Him. They were void, he said, of the love of God, full of self-love, envy, pride, seeking for praise and glory one from another. Hence they would not receive Him who came *in the name of the Father*, and who was sent to redeem the world; but if another, such as a false prophet, or even Antichrist himself, should come *in his own name*, him they would receive. "If you did believe Moses, you would perhaps believe Me also; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

The reasons why Jesus is not received.

After this, Jesus withdrew from the plots of His enemies, and once more turned in the direction of Galilee. The number of people that followed Him was now greatly increased, because they saw the miracles which He wrought on those that were infirm.

Jesus leaves Jerusalem for Galilee.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DISCIPLES PLUCK CORN ON THE SABBATH—THE WITHERED HAND—THE TWELVE APOSTLES

Matt. X., XII.; Mark II., III.; Luke VI.

"They that sought evils to Me spoke vain things, and studied deceits all the day long" (Ps. xxxvii. 13).

"For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than holocausts" (Osee vi. 6).

THE rulers of the Jews ceased not closely to observe the conduct of our Saviour even after His departure from Jerusalem; and during the second period of His Galilean ministry they were busy devising by what means they might ensnare Him in His words and bring about His destruction.

The Jews watch Jesus.

A walk through the fields on the Sabbath.

It was while He was returning to Galilee, on the Sabbath following the Passover, that Jesus happened to be walking through a cornfield, now ripe for the harvest. Pressed with hunger and fatigue, His disciples plucked some of the ears of corn, which they rubbed in their hands, and, blowing away the chaff, began to eat. When the Pharisees saw this they complained to our Saviour, and blamed them, not for plucking the corn, but for doing it on the Sabbath-day, as if their act involved a breach of the Sabbath. "Have you not read," said Jesus, "what David did when he was hungry, and they that were with him: how he went into the House of God, and did eat the Loaves of Proposition, which it was not lawful for him to eat, but for the priests only? Or have you not read in the Law that the priests in the Temple break the Sabbath, and are without blame?* But I tell you that there is here a greater than the Temple. And if you knew what this meaneth: *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*, you would never have condemned the innocent. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath also."

Jesus heals the withered hand.

Some little time later, but again on a Sabbath, Jesus came into the synagogue, probably at Capharnaum, and there was a man there who had a withered hand. The Scribes and the Pharisees watched our Saviour to see if He would heal the man on the Sabbath-day, that they might find an accusation against Him. Jesus, who knew their thoughts, bade the man stand up in the midst, and, turning to the Pharisees, He asked: "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy?" Was it better

* On the Sabbath the priests were allowed to cut the wood for the sacrifice, kindle the altar-fires, and change the Loaves of Proposition.

to assist our neighbour on a Sabbath, or to abandon him in his distress, when we were able to afford him relief? But they held their peace. "What man shall there be among you," He continued, "that hath one sheep: and if the same fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not take hold on it and lift it up? How much better is a man than a sheep? Therefore, it is lawful to do a good deed on the Sabbath-day." His reasoning admitted of no reply that would not be a justification of His actions. Still they remained silent. Then, grieving for the blindness of their hearts, He merely said to the man: "Stretch forth thy hand." The man obeyed, and immediately his hand was restored. When, on the former Sabbath, our Lord had taken the part of His disciples, the Pharisees did but mildly rebuke Him; but when, by a single word, without the performance of any external act, He restored the withered hand, they were so moved with rage against Him that they formed upon the spot a design of killing Him. But He, knowing their wicked intention, withdrew with His disciples to some spot on the shores of the Lake of Galilee.

Multitudes flock to Jesus.

Yet even here a great multitude, hearing the things which He did, came to Him from Galilee and Judaea, from Idumaea, and from beyond the Jordan, and from the sea-coast both of Tyre and Sidon. In such numbers did the people press about Him that He desired His disciples to procure a small boat from which He might address them. He healed many of their diseases, and cast out the unclean spirits from such as were possessed; and when the unclean spirits began to declare His Divinity, exclaiming, "Thou art the Son of God," He strictly charged them that they should not make Him known.

In these acts of mercy, extended even to many who were strangers to the Jewish faith, and performed far

away from the public gaze, St. Matthew sees the fulfilment of the words of Isaias: "Behold My servant whom I have chosen, My beloved in whom My soul hath been well pleased. I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not contend, nor cry out, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. The bruised reed He shall not break, and smoking flax He shall not extinguish: till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name the Gentile shall hope."

The office of Christ.

After a day of wearisome labour Jesus retired to a lonely mountain, where He spent the night in prayer; but as soon as the day began to dawn, He called around Him His disciples, and choosing twelve of them to fill the place of Apostles, He gave them the power of curing maladies both of soul and body, and of expelling devils, that by the authority of miracles they might prove the truth of their doctrines. The number would appear to have possessed a mystical meaning, and corresponded to the twelve Jewish Patriarchs, by whom they may be said to have been prefigured. Indeed, so much importance did the Apostles themselves attach to it, that they made it their first duty after the Resurrection to elect Matthias to fill up the place of the traitor Judas. Jesus chose them as His special companions, to whom He committed the charge of founding and governing His Church, and whom He sent as legates or ambassadors to all the world, and as the interpreters of the ways of God to man. Hence the words of St. Augustine: "Whatever the Church says is true; whatever she permits is lawful; whatever she forbids is evil; whatever she ordains is holy; whatever she institutes is good"; for the power which Jesus Christ delegated to His Apostles, they in their turn delegated to their successors in the ministry. To call in question, then, any ordinations that

The Twelve Apostles.

come to us with the authority of the Catholic Church would be presumption indeed.

Names of the Twelve.

The names of the Twelve were *Simon*, to whom He gave the name of Peter, a word signifying a rock,—by which our Lord would show that upon him His Church should be founded as on a rock never to be shaken,—and *Andrew* his brother; *James* and *John* the sons of Zebedee, whom He named Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder; *Philip* and *Bartholomew*; *Matthew* and *Thomas*; *James* the son of Alpheus; *Simon* who is called Zelotes; *Jude* the brother of James; and *Judas Iscariot* who was the traitor. After He had chosen the Twelve, Jesus went down with His disciples to a more extended and even part of the mountain, where a large crowd of people had assembled to hear Him. Many sick persons, also, were there, who wished to be cured of their diseases.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matt. V., VI., VII.; Luke VI.

"Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee; He shall not suffer the just to waver for ever" (Ps. liv. 23).

"See thou never do to another what thou wouldst not have done to thee by another" (Tob. iv. 16).

"Forgive thy neighbour if he hath hurt thee, and then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest" (Ecclus. xxviii. 2).

Mount of the Beatitudes.

In the hearing of all the assembled multitudes, our Lord addressed His disciples in that beautiful discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount. The hill which was the scene of His night-watch, and of the sermon which followed it, is generally believed to have been the one called by Christians the

Mount of the Beatitudes, and by the Arabs Kourn Hattin, situated between Capharnaum and Tiberias.

The Beatitudes.

In this Sermon our Lord points out to His hearers the only path of duty and happiness, the one path that will lead to the kingdom of heaven, to which kingdom He invites them by the most alluring promises of blessedness. "Blessed," He began, "are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice; for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart; for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Be glad in that day and rejoice; for behold, your reward is very great in heaven: for so they persecuted the Prophets who were before you."

The salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Jesus then goes on to style His hearers in general, but the Apostles in particular, the salt of the earth, meant to preserve men from the corruption of sin, and to make them relish the truths of salvation. And just as salt, if allowed to lose its savour, becomes useless, so, too, will they, if they suffer their faith or their charity to slacken, come to be rejected of God and despised by man. "You are the light of the world," He continued. "A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." This light of the world, this city on a mountain,

this candle upon a candlestick, are striking figures of the Catholic Church, so built upon Christ, the mountain, that, as St. Augustine says, it must be visible, and cannot be hidden or unknown: "therefore, the Church being a candle not under a bushel, but shining to all in the house, *i.e.*, in the world, what shall I say more than that all are blind who shut their eyes against the candle which is set on the candlestick?"

The Law of the Gospel.

To show that His mission was to accomplish all the figures and prophecies of the Old Law and to perfect all that was imperfect, our Saviour proceeded: "Do not think that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil; for amen I say to you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass of the Law, till all be fulfilled. He therefore that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the *least** in the kingdom of heaven. But he that shall do and teach, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." The justice which He will require of His followers must not be like that of the Scribes and the Pharisees, who contented themselves merely with the outward observance, but neglected the spirit of the Law; who performed what the Law ordained, not so much to please God, but to satisfy their own vanity.

The heart to be free from sin.

To avoid distinct acts of sin, such as the Law of Moses prohibited, was not enough; the heart itself must be free from sin; we must be perfect, not in act only, but in our very thoughts. Not only must we refrain from murder, but our angry passions must be kept in subjection; we must abstain from quarrels and injurious words: "I say to you that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the

* That is, says St. Augustine, he shall not be there at all.

judgment." So, too, with the sin of adultery. He who indulges in impure thoughts and desires, or any form of carnal lust, is guilty before God, who sees what passes in our inmost heart.

Untruthfulness forbidden.

Again, perjury was forbidden: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." All untruthfulness must be avoided, as well as unnecessary oaths in common discourse, by which the sacred name of God, which ought never to be pronounced without respect and reverence, is so frequently profaned.

Fraternal charity.

Next we have the commands He inculcated regarding fraternal charity: "You have heard that it hath been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans do this?" This portion of His instructions our Lord sums up by exhorting us to imitate, as far as in us lies, the Divine perfections: "Be ye perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."

Purity of intention.

He then goes on to tell us that not from selfish motives is good to be done, not merely from an inward impulse, but from a pure intention, and with a view to please God. "Take heed that you do not your justice before men, that you may be seen by them, otherwise you shall not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven." He wished by this to teach us to avoid vainglory, the agreeable plunderer of our good works, the pleasant enemy of our souls. He bids us have as the witness of our good works God alone, who has the power to reward us for them: "When thou dost give an alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right

hand doth, that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee." He bids us shun hypocrisy not only in almsgiving, but in the other eminent good works, prayer and fasting. He does not forbid the doing of them openly for the glory of God and the edification of our neighbour, but He would have us so perform our good works in public that the intention remain in secret: "So let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

The "Our Father."

He next proceeds to teach His disciples that most excellent of all prayers, the "Our Father," to show us what ought to be the object of all our desires. The principal subject of our prayers and the ultimate end of our every action ought to be the honour and glory of God, the establishment of God's kingdom, and the accomplishment of the Divine will in every part of the world. For ourselves we are to ask for our daily bread, not only the bread that maintains and supports our bodies, but more especially the supernatural support of the grace of God. We are here taught, also, to pray for the forgiveness of our sins; and that the condition on which we are to receive forgiveness is that we first of all forgive others the injuries they have done to us. Thus does God put man's judgment in his own hands that none may complain, seeing that each one is the author of his own sentence: "For, if you forgive men their offences, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you your offences." Finally, we are to pray that God will not suffer the devil to tempt us above our strength; that is, that He will remove the temptations or enable us to overcome them; and deliver us from evil, particularly the evil of sin.

We are thus taught that our longing is not to be for earthly treasures, but that we are to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust nor the moth

doth consume, and where thieves do not break through and steal. If the eye, which is the light of the body, be dim, continued our Lord, the whole body will be darksome; so, too, if our intention, which is the light of our actions, be not upright and pure and directed towards God, the whole body of our actions will be enveloped in darkness. He, therefore, who directs all his thoughts to God may justly be said to have his eye lightsome, and consequently his heart undefiled with earthly affections. We cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve both God and the world, the flesh and the spirit, justice and sin. The final object of our actions, then, must be either for this life or the next.

Simplicity of intention.

We are not to exhaust ourselves with solicitude for the things of this world, but to look up to our Heavenly Father, who knoweth what things we have need of, and careth for us. "Behold," He said, "the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And for raiment, why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. Now, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which is to-day, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous, therefore, saying: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not, therefore, solicitous for to-morrow. . . . Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

Detachment from earthly things.

He would have us refrain from judging or condemning others rashly, that we may not ourselves be judged or condemned: "Judge not, that you may not be judged." As

we behave towards our neighbours, interpreting their actions with charitableness, and excusing their intentions with mildness; or, on the contrary, judging them with severity, and condemning them without pity, so shall we receive our judgment: "With what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." He who sees the mote (*light faults*) in the eye of another must not forget the beam (*grievous faults*) in his own.

Rash judgment condemned.

After propounding these great and important truths, our Lord inculcates the necessity of prayer, assuring us that our petitions will be heard: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. Or what man is there among you, of whom, if his son shall ask bread, will he reach him a stone? Or if he shall ask him a fish, will he reach him a serpent? If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father, who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him?" Whatever, then, we ask that is necessary to salvation, if only we ask it with humility, fervour, and perseverance, we may be assured God will grant when it is best for us.

Exhortation to prayer.

Our Lord then concluded by once again reminding His hearers of the necessity of charity towards one's neighbour, and summed up our duty in regard to him in this golden rule: "All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets." He exhorted them to enter in by the narrow gate: "for wide is the gate, and broad is the road that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it." We are to be on our

Conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount.

guard against those who teach otherwise than He Himself has taught, and to judge of their teaching by the fruit it produces in their own lives, and in the conduct of those who act in accordance with their principles: "Beware of false prophets. . . . By their fruits you shall know them." He likened those who attended to His words to a wise man who built his house upon a rock. When the rain fell, and the floods came, and the wind blew, and they beat against that house, it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock: whereas, he who heeded not His words was to be likened to a man who built his house upon sand, which, when the flood came, perished, and great was the fall thereof. Now, when Jesus had ended these words, the people were in admiration at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as their Scribes and Pharisees.

How the Sermon may be divided.

The Sermon on the Mount may be conveniently divided into three parts—the exordium, the body of the discourse, and the conclusion. The exordium comprises the eight beatitudes, and gives us a first notion of the kingdom of heaven, and points out the way we must pursue to arrive there. The body of the discourse, although addressed to, and referring to, all the faithful in general, was directed especially to the Apostles whom Jesus had recently chosen, in order to instil into them, and all succeeding pastors of the Church, a right sense of the great duties of their ministry. It proclaims the spirit of the new dispensation, the superiority of the New Law over the Old, the obligations to be fulfilled, the means to be taken to arrive at evangelical perfection, and the character a true disciple of Jesus must bear. The conclusion consists of an exhortation to piety, and to keep along the strait way that leadeth to life.

In the assembly on the Mount we have represented to us the elements of Christ's visible Church upon earth.

The assembly on the Mount of Beatitudes.

Around our Saviour were His Apostles, whom He had chosen as ministers and teachers to guide the faithful; His disciples grouped about Him represent the great body of the Christian Church; while the crowd below was a figure of those waiting to receive the word of God—the harvest, the vineyard waiting for the labourers to enter. In the Sermon itself which He delivered is to be found the whole morality of the Gospel, both the truths in outline to be taught, and the works to be practised by those who would be His true disciples.

CHAPTER XVIII

HEALING OF THE CENTURION'S SERVANT—RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON TO LIFE—THE BAPTIST'S MESSAGE TO JESUS

Matt. VIII., XI.; Luke VII.

"Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6).

"The Lord giveth food to the hungry, the Lord enlighteneth the blind; He lifteth up them that are cast down . . . (and He who does these things) shall reign for ever thy God, O Sion, unto generation and generation" (Ps. cxlv.).

The Roman centurion's request.

After our Saviour had finished His discourse on the Mount, and had returned, followed by many people, to Capharnaum, there came to Him some of the elders of the Jews, who had been sent by a certain Roman centurion to ask Him to come and heal his favourite servant, who was lying dangerously ill with paralysis. They earnestly besought Him to grant the centurion's request, urging that he loved their people, and had built them a synagogue.

Without delay Jesus set out in the direction of the centurion's house; and as He drew near, those who accompanied Him went forward to inform the centurion of His approach. Great was the surprise of the centurion on learning this, for he never expected to receive Jesus into his house, knowing as he well did that, in the eyes of the Pharisees, one who entered the house of an unbeliever was defiled. Moreover, how could he, who before had deemed himself unworthy to address Jesus, presume now to receive Him into his house? The faith he displayed on this occasion drew from our Saviour Himself words of admiration. Filled with awe and with a deep sense of his own unworthiness to receive so great an honour, he sent forward some of his friends to meet our Lord, and to beg Him not to trouble Himself so far as to visit him. He bade them tell Him that he himself was a man subject to authority, who had to obey another, and who had servants under him; that he had only to say to his soldiers do this or do that, and they obeyed him; that he was not worthy that He should enter under his roof, and that if He would only say the word His servant would be healed.

The faith and humility of the centurion.

Now, when Jesus heard their message, He marvelled, and, turning to the multitude that followed Him, He exclaimed: "Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith even in Israel. And I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." He then bade the messengers return; and as the centurion had believed, so was it done to him. On reaching the house they found that the servant had been restored to health at the moment they had been bidden to return.

Jesus heals the centurion's servant.

The widow's son raised to life.

After this our Lord, accompanied by His disciples and a great multitude of people, went to Naïm, a city of Galilee, some few miles to the south of Mount Thabor. It was at the gate of this city that He performed the miracle of raising to life the widow's son. As He drew near to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was being carried out for burial, the only son of his mother, who was a widow. Touched with sorrow for her great loss, many people had come to join in the solemn procession that was now passing through the city gate. The affliction of this distressed widowed mother, deprived of her only support and the staff of her old age, moved our Lord to pity. He approached the poor woman, and bidding her weep not, touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. In an instant all eyes were fixed upon Jesus, and all waited in anxious suspense to see what He would do next. The solemn silence which ensued was only broken by the words of our Lord calling to the dead man: "Young man, I say to thee, arise!" Instantly the youth rose up and began to speak, and Jesus delivered him to his mother. And there came a great fear upon all, and they glorified God, saying: "A great Prophet has risen up among us, and God hath visited His people."

In this wonderful miracle our Saviour is not like Elias weeping for the son of the widow of Sarepta, nor like Eliseus who stretched himself over the body of the dead child, or the Prophets who wrought miracles by invoking the name of God. It was by His own power and at His own command that He raised the dead to life: "Young man, *I* say to thee, arise!"

The Baptist's message.

It is about this time that we have the last mention of John the Baptist before his death. He had now been in prison for the greater part of a year, but had not been prevented from seeing his disciples, who came to tell him of the wonderful works

performed by our Saviour. Deeming this a favourable opportunity to convince his followers that Jesus, and not himself, was the true Messias, and to direct their minds to the only Teacher who could instruct them in the way of life, he selected two, whom he sent to Jesus to ask: "Art Thou He who is to come, or look we for another?" The two duly delivered their master's message; but before Jesus undertook to reply to their question, He performed on the spot various kinds of miracles: "In that same hour He cured many of their diseases, and hurts, and of evil spirits." Then, instead of returning a plain answer in words to John's inquiry, He bade the messengers relate to their master what they had seen and heard: "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, to the poor the Gospel is preached: and blessed is he that shall not be scandalised in Me." Thus did He prove in a much more forcible manner than He could have done by words that He was the Messias, by pointing to the miracles which Isaias foretold would mark the coming of the Messias.

Christ's testimony to John.

When the messengers had departed, Jesus spoke to the multitude concerning John, and asked: "What went ye out into the desert to see? a reed shaken with the wind? or a man clothed in soft garments? But they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings. Or was it a prophet? Yea, I tell you, and more than a prophet: for this is he of whom it is written: Behold I send My angel before Thy face who shall prepare Thy way before Thee." John was indeed a prophet in that he foretold he coming of Christ. He was more than a prophet, inasmuch as he was the precursor of the Messias, whom, unlike the other prophets, he had seen in person, whom he had first pointed out to the people, and whom, by a special privilege, he had been permitted to baptise. Jesus went on to style John

Elias; not that he was so in person, but because he came in the spirit and virtue of Elias, and had the same fulness of the Holy Ghost. John also resembled Elias both in the austerity of his life and in his sufferings. Elias upbraided Achab and Jezabel for their impieties, and was obliged to flee; John blamed the unlawful marriage of Herod and Herodias, and for this was imprisoned and put to death.

Denunciation of the Galilean cities.

In speaking of the kingdom of heaven, by which, in this place, He meant eternal life, Jesus told His hearers that it was to be obtained only by doing violence to ourselves, by mortification and penance, and by resisting our evil inclinations. He then spoke of the woe that was impending over the cities of Corozain and Bethsaida, which had been so much favoured by His presence, and which had witnessed the mighty works He had performed in them. The inhabitants of these cities would not be raised from the deep lethargy into which they were sunk, and refused to make good use of the opportunities offered them; hence our Lord's terrible threats: "I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capharnaum, shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt go down even unto hell; for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom that have been done in thee, perhaps it would have remained to this day."

Come to Me, all you that labour.

He thanked His Heavenly Father that He had hidden Divine wisdom from the worldly wise and prudent, and had revealed it to the humble. "All things," He continued, "are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knoweth the Son but the Father; neither doth anyone know the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." He then concluded with those beautiful and encouraging words: "Come to Me, all you that labour and are heavily laden, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon

you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls: for My yoke is sweet, and My burden light."

CHAPTER XIX

JESUS IS ANOINTED BY A PENITENT WOMAN—HE HEALS A BLIND AND DUMB DEMONIAC—THE PHARISEES ASK FOR A SIGN

Matt. XII.; Mark III.; Luke VII., VIII., XI.

"And I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezech. xxxvi. 26).

"And Jonas was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (Jonas ii. 1).

Jesus at the Pharisee's table.

THAT same day, at Naïm, Jesus was invited by a Pharisee, named Simon,* to a banquet. And while He, after the custom then prevalent in the East, reclined at the table, with His feet, which had been divested of their sandals at the threshold, naturally turned from it, a certain woman who was known to be a sinner stole behind the couch on which He was reclining, and began to wash His feet with her tears and to wipe them with her hair. Then, taking an alabaster box of precious ointment, which she had brought with her, she kissed His feet and anointed them with the ointment.

Parable of the Two Debtors.

The Pharisee, filled with indignation at her presence, and scandalised at our Saviour's seeming want of discernment, said within himself: "This man, if He were a Prophet, would surely know who and what kind of woman this is that toucheth Him, for

* Simon the Pharisee must not be confounded with Simon the Leper, who, a few days before the Passion, gave a banquet in honour of Jesus in Bethany.

she is a sinner." To show that He was not ignorant of the woman's character, and that not only did He see the wickedness of her past life, but the present unjust thoughts of the Pharisee, our Lord thus addressed him: "Simon, I have something to say to thee: A certain debtor had two creditors, one of whom owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty; and whereas they had not wherewith to pay the debt, he forgave them both. Which therefore of the two loveth him most?" "I suppose," answered Simon, "he to whom he forgave most." Jesus said to him: "Thou hast judged rightly. Now when I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but this woman whom thou seest here hath washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she with ointment hath anointed My feet: wherefore I say to thee: many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less." Then, turning to the woman, He told her that her sins were forgiven her, and bade her go in peace. All that the Pharisees ventured to do was to murmur among themselves: "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" This woman, according to universally received tradition, was none other than Mary Magdalene.

Second Galilean circuit.

After this, Jesus made a *second circuit* of Galilee, attended by the Twelve Apostles and certain devout women whom He had delivered from evil spirits or other infirmities, and who now ministered to Him out of their substance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils, Johanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chusa, and many others.

On His return to Capharnaum from this second missionary journey, He was besieged by the crowd in such

numbers that He and His disciples could not so much as find time to eat. When His kindred heard this, they were very angry, and losing all self-control, would have laid hands upon Him, for they said: "He is become mad." But when they came to seize Him, they were unable to force their way into the house in which He was, on account of the dense throngs of people, who had just received a fresh incentive to their enthusiasm. A man, whom the devil had rendered blind and dumb, had been brought to Him that he might be cured; and Jesus healed him so that he both saw and spoke. In their amazement at the wonderful miracle the people asked: "Is not this the Son of David?" But some Pharisees, who also had accompanied Him, accused Him of casting out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Jesus, however, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." He showed them that the strong could be overcome only by one stronger, that the kingdom of God was in antagonism to the kingdom of Satan, and that it was necessary to choose either the one or the other: "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth."

Jesus charged with being in league with Satan.

"Every sin," He continued, "and every blasphemy shall be forgiven; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come, but shall be guilty of an everlasting sin." This blasphemy

Sins against the Holy Ghost.

against the Holy Spirit committed by the Pharisees in attributing His miracles, wrought by the Spirit of God, to Beelzebub, the prince of devils, their resisting the kingdom of God and His grace brought near to them, would bring them in consequence into the absolute power of Satan, and to that sin for which there is no possible forgiveness. We are told that this kind of sin is generally accompanied with so much obstinacy and such wilful opposition to the Spirit of God and the known truth that they who are guilty of it are seldom or never converted, and therefore are never forgiven because they will not repent. Otherwise there is no sin which God cannot or will not forgive to such as are truly sorry. The tree, He told them, was known by its fruit; by which He would have them understand that if they could not blame His life and His doctrine, they ought to acknowledge Him to be good, to be like the good tree; as the tree which is good bears good fruit. Moreover, if for every idle word an account was to be rendered at the day of judgment, what a terrible account would be exacted for the blasphemy which said that by Beelzebub He cast out devils!

The Pharisees ask for a sign.

Then some of the Scribes and the Pharisees who stood around expressed a wish to see some new and unusual miracle, that they might be assured that He was sent of God and acted by the Spirit. Jesus said to them: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign; and a sign shall not be given it but the sign of Jonas the prophet: for as Jonas was three days in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days in the heart of the earth." He would give them no other sign than that of His death and resurrection. So also in St. John: "When you shall have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as the Father hath taught Me I speak these things" (viii. 28). The time would come, He

told them, when the people of Ninive should rise up in judgment against them, and when the queen of Saba should condemn them for their unbelief; for she came from afar to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon was there, and greater things were done for them. Then, pointing His parable more at the Jewish race than at the man out of whom he had cast the unclean spirit, He added: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest; and not finding, he saith: I will return into my house whence I came out. And when he is come he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there; and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first." Thereupon a certain woman in the crowd, unable to repress her admiration at His teaching, exclaimed: "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the breasts that gave thee suck." Not blaming her, but directing her attention to still higher blessedness, Jesus said to her: "Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it."

Christ's mother and brethren seek Him.

While Jesus was speaking in this manner, a man of the company, glad, doubtless, of the opportunity of putting a termination to a discourse so painful to many of them, pushed his way up to Him, and said: "Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, seeking Thee." But He, pointing to His faithful followers, exclaimed: "Behold My mother and My brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother"; thus indicating that what He regarded most, even in Mary His mother, was the perfect manner in which she at all times conformed her will to the Divine will.

After this Jesus rose up, and, leaving the house, took the road to the lake, where He sat down by the beach.

CHAPTER XX

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD—JESUS STILLS THE TEMPEST

Matt. XIII., VIII.; Mark IV.; Luke VIII., IX.

"I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the beginning" (Ps. lxxvii. 2).

"Hearing, hear and understand not; and see the vision and see it not" (Isa. vi. 9).

Jesus by the Sea of Galilee.

On the same day on which Jesus had wrought the miracle and delivered the discourse recorded in the last chapter, we find Him by the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where a great multitude had collected to hear His word. That He might the more conveniently address them, He sat down in one of the fishing-boats lying close to the shore, and from it taught them in parables.

Parable of the Sower.

He commenced with the *Parable of the Sower.* "Hear ye," He said; "behold the sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air came and ate it up. And other some fell upon stony ground where it had not much earth, and it shot up immediately because it had no depth of earth; and when the sun was risen it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And some fell upon good ground and brought forth fruit, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty fold." Then, by way of exhorting His hearers to examine the meaning of the parable, He added: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Another parable, that of the *Wheat and the Cockle*, He proposed to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is

likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up and had brought forth fruit, there appeared also the cockle. And the servants of the goodman of the house coming said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? Whence then has it cockle? He said to them: An enemy hath done this. The servants asked him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up? But he answered: No; lest perhaps gathering up the cockle you root up the wheat also together with it. Suffer both to grow till the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn."

Parable of the Wheat and the Cockle.

Continuing His discourse, He said: "So is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast good seed into the earth, and should sleep, and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow whilst he knoweth not; for the earth of itself bringeth forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear. And when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come": by which He would show them that, as with the sower, so was it with him who announced the kingdom of heaven. For whether he sleep or rise, the seed will grow up while he knoweth not; and the well-prepared soil will, by the blessing of God, be productive. The word of God shed abroad in the heart of man will increase and fructify independently of all the preacher's solicitude, till he who has received it, being arrived at the measure of the age and fulness of Christ, shall be withdrawn by God from the world and called to Himself.

Parable of the Seed which grows secretly.

A further parable He spoke to them, saying: "To what

shall we liken the kingdom of God, or to what parable shall we compare it? It is as a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that are in the earth; and when it is sown, it groweth up and becometh greater than all the herbs, and shooteth out great branches, so that the birds of the air may dwell under the shadow thereof."

Parable of the Mustard Seed.

Yet another parable He addressed to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened." How truly do we here see fulfilled those words of the Psalmist: "I will open My mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world" (Ps. lxxvii. 2).

Parable of the Leaven.

Of the eight parables, all spoken by Jesus on the same day, it is commonly supposed that the five already mentioned were addressed to all that were assembled on the sea-shore, and that the other three were added by Him when alone with the Apostles in the house, since they are in some measure explanations of the former. When He had finished speaking and had returned to the house, He was asked by the Twelve: "Why speakest Thou to them in parables?" He answered: "Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to them it is not given. For he that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall abound; but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away that also which he hath"—that is, they who have received graces and favours from God, and have not made good use of them and profited by them, may be said *not to have them*, although they are not yet taken from them; and this because they make no more use of them than if they had them not. "Therefore," He continued,

Jesus explains the Parables to His Apostles.

"do I speak to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." They see not as they might see and ought to see, because they shut their eyes against the lights given them. They bring upon themselves that spiritual blindness foretold by the prophet Isaias, of which, by their wilful obstinacy, they are the true cause; and by their obstinacy they make themselves unworthy of particular lights from God. They saw our Saviour cast out devils, and said: "In Beelzebub He casteth out devils." They heard Him affirm that He drew all to God, and they said: "This man cometh not from God." Since, therefore, they assert the very contrary to what they see and hear, the gift of seeing and hearing shall be taken from them. "But blessed are your eyes," He said, "because they see, and your ears, because they hear. For, amen I say to you, many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them. Hear ye, therefore, the Parable of the Sower."*

Parable of the Sower explained.

"The seed is the word of God; and they by the wayside are they that hear: then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the stony ground are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no roots; for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation they fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they who have heard, and going their way are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience."

* St. Matthew places the explanation of this parable immediately after its utterance.

He also gave them to understand that they were not to bury in unjust silence the instruction and examples which He gave them, but that they were to exercise them for the light and direction of others. They must pay attention to what they heard that they might retain it, and communicate it to others; for in what measure they measured to others so should it be meted unto them; yea, even more should be given them.

Parable of the Cockle explained.

To the request of His disciples begging Him to explain the Parable of the Cockle, He rejoined: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, the cockle are the children of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed them is the devil. But the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. Even as the cockle, therefore, is gathered up and burnt with fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals, and such as work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." As a further exposition of what He had already said, He spoke to them three other parables.

Parable of the Treasure.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field, which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Parable of the Pearl.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way and sold all that he had, and bought it.

"And again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes,

which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth.* So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Parable of the Net cast into the Sea.

From these words of our Saviour we see how God gives to every man perfect freedom of will to accept or reject the graces offered him. Those who wickedly torn their backs upon Him, and scorn His invitation, He tolerates till the harvest, both for their own sake, and for the sake of those among whom they live. We are taught, moreover, the gradual development of the word of God in the world under the silent influence of His grace.

After these discourses Jesus directed His disciples to sail with Him across the lake to its eastern shore. It was at this moment that a certain Scribe drew near to Him and said: "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou shalt go." Jesus answered him: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Thus was the Scribe rejected by our Saviour, doubtless because he wished to follow Him more through the desire of glory and the hope of becoming great in His kingdom than with the design of perfecting himself in virtue; or perhaps his conduct was too presumptuous. He did not petition to be admitted as an Apostle, but would appear to have claimed the honour of the Apostleship,—an honour none must assume but such as are called by God. But when Jesus bade another follow Him, he replied: "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." Jesus answered him: "Follow Me, and let

Disinterestedness required in the true disciple.

* It is the opinion of many that these three parables also were spoken before the whole multitude.

the dead bury the dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God":—by which He would have us know how much more value we must set on spiritual duties than on things even the most necessary; and that the preaching of the kingdom of God is more important and necessary than even the burying of the dead.

During their passage across the lake so violent a storm arose that their ship was on the point of sinking; and Jesus was sleeping with His head resting upon a pillow in the hinder part of the ship. In their alarm the disciples came and awoke Him, exclaiming: "Lord, save us, we perish!" Jesus said to them: "Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?" Then, rising up, He rebuked the wind and the sea, saying: "Peace, be still!" and immediately the wind ceased, and there came a great calm. All who saw the miracle were amazed, and said one to another: "What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?"

CHAPTER XXI

THE GERASENE OR GADARENE DEMONIAC—JESUS RAISES THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS TO LIFE—TWO BLIND MEN AND A DUMB DEMONIAC HEALED—JESUS REVISITS NAZARETH

Matt. VIII., IX., XIII.; Mark V., VI.; Luke VIII.

"Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. xxxv. 5).

"I am become a stranger to My brethren" (Ps. lxviii. 9).

The Gerasene demoniac.

HARDLY was Jesus landed on the east side of the Lake of Genesareth, in the country of the Gerasenes, or Gadarenes, when there met Him a man possessed by devils. So much was this poor man under the tyranny of the Evil One that he had become

a danger to everybody, and, by reason of his ferocity, no one durst approach him. He ran wild among the mountains, would wear no clothes, roved among the tombs howling pitifully both by night and by day, and, as St. Mark tells us, cutting himself with sharp stones. He could not be secured even with chains; for, though he had often been bound, he had burst his chains and broken the fetters in pieces, and defied all attempts at taming him. He would not dwell in a house, but abode in the sepulchres, which consisted of chambers or caves excavated in the cliffs. As soon as he saw Jesus approaching, he ran towards Him with his usual impetuosity and fell down at His feet, crying out in a loud voice: "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of the Most High? I adjure Thee in the name of God that Thou torment me not." "What is thy name?" asked Jesus. He answered: "My name is Legion; for we are many." Thereupon the unclean spirit besought our Saviour not to drive him out of the country, but to allow him to enter into a herd of swine that were feeding a little way off. Jesus granted his request; and no sooner did the devils enter into the swine than the whole herd, to the number of two thousand, ran headlong down the steep hill-side, and, plunging into the lake, perished.

The Gerasenes entreat Jesus to depart.

The keepers fled to the city, where they told the news, and the excited people at once ran down in haste to see what had been done. What was their astonishment to see the man who had been possessed, clothed and in his sane mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus! When they saw all that had been done, caring more for their swine than for their souls, they entreated our Saviour to leave their country. Just as He was preparing to recross the lake to Capharnaum, and was stepping into the boat, the man whom He had healed came to Him, and entreated to be allowed to

remain with Him; but Jesus told him to return to his friends and tell them what great things the Lord had done for him, and how He had had mercy upon him. The man obeyed, and began to publish throughout Decapolis the wonderful favours that Jesus had bestowed upon him; and all men wondered.

Lesson of the miracle.

By the foregoing miracle our Lord clearly proved that the devils have no power even over swine without His permission. He also punished those Jews who fed upon swine's flesh contrary to the Law; and, by permitting the devil to destroy the swine, He showed the power of the Evil One, that the Gerasenes might take alarm and be converted. He, moreover, confuted the Sadducean doctrine which denied the existence of spirits, good or bad.

Jesus heals the issue of blood.

Jesus now crossed the lake again and came to Capharnaum, where the people were waiting to receive Him. Among them was a ruler of the synagogue named Jairus, who came and fell at the feet of Jesus, and humbly entreated Him to come to his house, for his only daughter, who was now twelve years of age, was lying at the point of death. Our Lord no sooner heard the request of the ruler than He followed him, accompanied by His disciples and a great concourse of people. Now, among these was a woman who for twelve years had had an issue of blood. She had spent all she possessed upon physicians, and after so many years of suffering found herself worse rather than better. But having heard of the works of Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd merely to touch His garments; for she said: "If I shall touch but His garment I shall be healed." And so it proved; for the instant she touched His robe she felt that she was cured. Our Saviour, who knew that virtue had proceeded from Him, immediately turned round to the people and inquired who had touched Him. His disciples

answered Him: "Seest Thou the multitude thronging Thee? and sayest Thou: Who touched Me?" But when the woman saw that He knew all, she came forward in great fear and trembling, and, falling down at His feet, declared before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. Jesus spoke kindly to her and said: "Be of good heart, daughter; thy faith hath made thee whole: go thy way in peace."

Jesus raises Jairus's daughter to life.

Meanwhile, messengers had come from Jairus's house to tell him that he need trouble Jesus no longer, as his daughter was already dead. But Jesus said to the ruler: "Fear not; only believe." And when He was come to the house, He would allow no one to enter with Him but Peter, James, and John, and the parents of the maiden. The house was filled with mourners; but our Saviour turned to them and said: "Why make you this ado? the damsel is not dead but sleepeth." And they laughed Him to scorn; for they knew that she was dead. He then compelled them to leave the house, and going with His three disciples and the father and mother of the child into the room where the body was lying, He took the maiden by the hand, and called to her, saying: "*Talitha, cumi*," which means, Damsel (I say to thee), arise. Immediately, to the intense astonishment of all, she rose up and walked. Before leaving the house, Jesus gave strict injunctions that they should tell the occurrence to no one, but commanded them to go at once and procure food for the child, who, during her long illness, had tasted nothing. But the fame of the miracle went abroad into all the country.

The three resurrections.

Only three people are mentioned in Scripture as having been raised from the dead by our Saviour. One was a person who had just died; another was being carried out for burial; and the third, Lazarus, had for some time lain in the tomb. In

these three different stages we have represented for us the different states of the sinner, each succeeding condition being more desperate than the one before it.

Two blind men healed.

After Jesus had left the house of Jairus, there followed Him two blind men, who called to Him: "Have mercy on us, O Son of David!" When He had come to the house at which He was staying, the blind men approached Him and made the same request. "Believe you," He asked, "that I can do this unto you?" On their affirming their belief that He could, He touched their eyes, saying: "According to your faith be it done unto you." Instantly their eyes were opened; and, although Jesus charged the men to tell no one, they spread the story of their cure throughout all the country.

Cure of the dumb demoniac.

Hardly had they gone away when a dumb man, possessed with a devil, was brought to Him. Jesus cast out the devil, and the dumb man spoke; whereupon the people in astonishment exclaimed: "Never was the like done in Israel!" But the Pharisees reiterated their old statement, "By the prince of devils He casteth out devils."

Christ's Second Rejection at Nazareth.

It was probably at this time that our Lord made a further visit to Nazareth, although some identify it with the one recorded by St. Luke (iv.) as having taken place at the outset of His public life. St. Mark, in this instance, after recording what took place at Jairus's house, tells us how Jesus, "going out from thence, went into His own country; and His disciples followed Him." On the Sabbath-day He began to teach in the synagogue at Nazareth, but the reception He met with was little better than the one He had experienced on the occasion of His visit a year before. All wondered at His wisdom, and were astonished at the works He performed. "Is not this the carpenter's Son?"

they asked. "Is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren* James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Jude? And His sisters,* are they not all with us?" And they were scandalised in regard to Him. But Jesus said to them: "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country, and in his own house, and among his own kindred." Because of their unbelief He worked but few miracles among them; yet some of their sick He cured by laying His hands upon them. And He marvelled because of their unbelief; and leaving Nazareth for good and all, He went through the villages round about teaching.

CHAPTER XXII

JESUS MAKES A THIRD CIRCUIT OF THE CITIES OF GALILEE—MISSION OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES —DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Matt. IX., X., XIV.; Mark VI.; Luke IX., XII.

"For the son dishonoureth the father, and the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's enemies are they of his own household" (Mic. vii. 6).

Harvest great, but labourers few.

After quitting the ungrateful city in which He had spent His boyhood and early manhood, Jesus went about the cities and towns of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and infirmity. When He saw the multitude cast down and oppressed, like sheep without a shepherd, He had compassion on them, and said to His disciples: "The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send forth labourers into His harvest."

* These terms are also used of near relations.

Mission of the Apostles, and Christ's instructions to them.

Then did He call to Him the Twelve, and sending them two and two, gave them power to cast out devils, to heal diseases, and to preach the kingdom of God. As it was fitting that the Gospel should first be announced to the Jews, who were the children of the kingdom, He on this occasion confined their mission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and forbade the Twelve to enter the country of the Gentiles or the cities of the Samaritans. He sent them to make known, not any earthly tidings, but the good things of eternity. He bade them heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils. He admonished them not to work for the sake of gain; but, as they had gratuitously received the gift of faith, to communicate it in like manner to others. They must not look for any temporal reward, nor have a care about their bodily wants, but set out as those who have no more than what is necessary: "For," said He, "the workman is worthy of his meat." When they entered into a house they were to salute it with the words: "Peace be to this house"; and if that house were worthy, their peace should come upon it; if it were not worthy, their peace should return to them. If in any house or city their message was welcomed, they were to remain there; if not, they had to hasten out of that house or city, and shake off the dust from their feet as a testimony against it: "For, amen I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city."

He next spoke of the difficulties and dangers that awaited them, and warned them to be circumspect and discreet, but harmless and sincere, in all their actions and dealings. He sent them, He told them, as sheep into the midst of wolves, by which He would imply that passion was to be overcome, not by passion, but by meekness only:

nothing harsh, nothing severe, must escape them either in word or act. He likens them to sheep, not only because of their innocence, but because they were sent forth among enemies unarmed and destitute of all human support. He sent them into a world where opposition and persecution would be their lot. They were to be brought before councils, and scourged in the synagogues; they would be brought before governors and kings, but the Spirit of their Father would direct them what to say. A conflict would arise affecting all the relations of life: children would rise against parents and parents against children; that is, people would rise up to oppress true believers, and these must abandon their nearest relations when they prove an obstacle to salvation. All men would hate them for His name's sake. When persecution arose against them in one city, let them fly to another. The disciple, He said, was not above his master, nor the servant above his lord; they therefore must willingly receive and bear with patience all those things which He, their Master, underwent. Let them not fear those who kill the body, but rather Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell. "Whosoever," He continued, "shall confess Me before men, I will confess him before My Father who is in heaven. He that loveth father or mother or son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not up His cross and followeth Me is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for My sake shall find it." So that he who in this life finds pleasures and comforts, and places his affections upon them, shall certainly soon lose them; whereas he that shall, for the sake of Christ, deprive himself of the pleasures of this life shall receive reward a hundredfold in the next. "He that receiveth Me," He said, "receiveth Him that sent Me. And whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name

of a disciple, amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

The Twelve go forth to preach.

The Twelve, then, going forth, preached penance. They cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. Jesus also departed thence to teach and preach in the cities.

Herod's alarm.

Herod, who, as we have seen, had imprisoned John the Baptist for the outspoken manner in which he had protested against his unlawful marriage with Herodias, had in the meantime put him to death, and was now afraid, when he heard of the wondrous works of Jesus; for many thought He was the Baptist risen from the dead, others that He was Elias, and some that He was one of the ancient Prophets.

Martyrdom of the Baptist.

The words of John to Herod had never been forgotten by the wicked Herodias. They had engendered in her feelings of deadly hate, which she fostered till an opportunity occurred for gratifying her revenge. It came about thus. On the occasion of his birthday Herod was entertaining the chief officials of Galilee, when Salome, the daughter of Herodias, danced before the assembled guests. So delighted was Herod with her performance, that he promised on oath to give her whatsoever she asked, even though it were the half of his kingdom. Before expressing her wish, Salome retired to confer with her mother, who, seeing a way fully to satiate her spite, bade her daughter return and demand the head of John the Baptist. Again she presented herself before Herod, and asked that the head of John the Baptist might be given to her on a dish. Herod was struck with anguish when she tendered her request; but because of his oath, and out of respect for his guests, he would not draw back, but beheaded John in prison. The head was brought

in on a dish and presented to the damsel, who carried it to her mother.

John's grief-stricken disciples reverently buried the body of their beloved master, and, coming to Jesus, told Him all that had happened.

CHAPTER XXIII

FIRST MULTIPLICATION OF THE LOAVES—JESUS WALKS ON THE WAVES

Matt. XIV.; Mark VI.; Luke IX.; John VI.

"Thou gavest them bread from heaven prepared without labour" (Wisd. xvi. 20).

"Who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and walketh upon the waves of the sea" (Job ix. 8).

Return of the Twelve.

When the Apostles returned from their missionary labours, and reported to Jesus the result of their journey, He wished to take them into a desert place apart that they might rest a little after their long-continued exertions, and avoid the throng which, coming and going continuously, did not even leave them time to eat.

Jesus crosses to Bethsaida Julias.

At His request they accordingly sought out a boat, crossed the lake, and retired into the desert region of Bethsaida Julias, which lies to the north-east of the Sea of Galilee, near the spot where the Jordan empties itself into the lake. But many who had seen them depart and wished to join them, went round by the northern extremity of the lake, and made such haste as to arrive at the desert before them, while many others followed after. In addition to these were many pilgrims who had come from distant lands, and who were now on their way to Jerusalem for the approaching festival; for, as we learn from St. John, the Pasch

was at hand—probably the third Passover during our Lord's public ministry.

The people find Jesus.

Arrived at Bethsaida, Jesus led the way to a lonely and retired hill, where He sat down with His weary little band of Apostles. But they were not destined to enjoy even a momentary repose. Hardly, indeed, had they sat down when Jesus, looking up, saw the multitude coming towards Him bearing their sick along with them. Moved with compassion for them, and forgetful of His own weariness, He rose up to meet them, healed their infirmities, and spoke to them of the kingdom of heaven, for they were as sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus has compassion on the multitude.

Towards evening the Apostles came to Jesus and advised Him to send the people away that they might buy food in the nearest villages, for they had come without having made any provision against so long a fast. "They have no need to go," Jesus answered. "Give ye them to eat." To Philip He said: "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" "Two hundred pennyworth of bread," replied Philip, "is not sufficient for them that every man may take a little." Another of His Apostles, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Him: "There is a little boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many?" Jesus, however, bade them make the men sit down upon the grass in companies of hundreds and of fifties. Now, there were five thousand men besides women and children.

The five thousand fed.

Jesus next told them to bring Him the loaves and the fishes. Taking them into His hands, He raised His eyes towards heaven, blessed them, and distributed them to His disciples to set before the multitude. After all had eaten and were satisfied, He bade His disciples gather the fragments that were left

for fear they should be lost, when it was found that the leavings filled twelve baskets. By this great miracle Jesus sought to prepare the minds of His followers for the reception of still higher truths, for the wonderful mystery of His love—the institution of the most Holy Eucharist, of which this multiplication of the loaves was but a figure. But their thoughts were on other things. They believed that all their dreams of earthly happiness were on the point of being accomplished, and exclaimed: "This is of a truth the Prophet that is to come into the world." They had even a mind to take Him forcibly and make Him their king; but He, knowing their intention, withdrew from the multitude and went up into the mountain alone, after bidding His disciples sail to the western shore.

Jesus walks on the sea.

When it grew dark, and the ship was well out to sea, a sudden storm arose, and the waters were lashed into fury. In spite of all their efforts at the oars, the Apostles found it all but impossible to make headway against a contrary wind and the violence of the waves; and, whereas they had hoped to arrive early at the port of Capharnaum, the fourth watch of the night found them tossing amid the raging billows some twenty-five or thirty furlongs from where they had started. Suddenly they saw at some distance off what appeared to be a man walking upon the waters and coming towards them; but as he drew near, he made as though he would have passed them. Believing it to be a phantom, they cried out in terror. But soon their fears were allayed when the well-known voice of Jesus reached their ears: "It is I, fear ye not!" Then Peter, full of faith and love, exclaimed: "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters!" When Jesus bade him come, he immediately stepped out of the vessel and began to walk upon the waves; but when he found himself surrounded by the sea and the billows surging

around him, he lost courage, and forthwith began to sink. Terrified, he called aloud: "Lord, save me!" Jesus, immediately stretching forth His hand, took hold of him, and said: "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?" No sooner had they got into the ship than the wind ceased; and the rest of those in the ship, having by this time cast aside all fear, fell down at the feet of Jesus and worshipped Him, saying: "Thou art truly the Son of God." The sea now became smooth, and the vessel was brought safely into the harbour which it had so long struggled in vain to reach.

The return of Jesus to Capharnaum.

Jesus was recognised immediately, and presently the whole neighbourhood was in a state of commotion. Wherever He went the people brought their sick to Him, carrying them upon beds. If He entered their towns or villages, those that were ill or maimed besought Him to let them touch even the hem of His garment, and as many as did so were made whole.

CHAPTER XXIV

JESUS, THE LIVING BREAD

John VI.

"God had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them the bread of heaven. Man ate the bread of angels" (Ps. lxxvii. 24, 25).

"Come, eat My bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you" (Prov. ix. 5).

"They that eat Me shall yet hunger; and they that drink Me shall yet thirst" (Ecclus. xxiv. 29).

The true Bread of Life.

Next day the people who had remained on the eastern side of the lake found that Jesus was not there, and as they were convinced that He had not crossed with His disciples, they believed that He must have set forth on His return journey by

land. They therefore took possession of some ships that had in the meantime arrived from Tiberias, and crossed over to Capharnaum. Astonished to find that not only had He preceded them, but that He was teaching in the synagogue, and wondering how He could have arrived there before them, they exclaimed: "Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?" Instead of giving an express answer to their question, He replied rather to their thoughts, and gave them to understand that their anxiety should not be for temporal prosperity, but for their eternal welfare. "You seek Me," He said, "not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you; for Him hath God the Father sealed." "What shall we do," they asked in amazement, "that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered: "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He hath sent." Understanding from His words that He declared Himself greater than Moses, since Moses had not been able to give them bread which should never perish, the Jews wished for some visible sign by which they might believe in Him. They therefore said to Him: "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat": as though they would have said: "Thou hast only given us bread, where then is the food that perishes not?" Jesus therefore answered them that the food which Moses gave them was not the true manna from heaven, but that it was only a figure of Himself who came down from heaven to give life to the world: "Amen, amen, I say to you, Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; for the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world." Then, as though acknowledging Him to be truly God, they entreated

Him not merely to ask His Father, but to give them this bread Himself: "Lord, give us always this bread!" Jesus answered: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst. I came down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. Now, this is the will of the Father who sent Me, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth in Him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

The Jews murmur against Jesus.

The Jews then began to murmur when He spoke of Himself as the living bread which came down from heaven, and said among themselves: "Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then saith He: I came down from heaven?" Jesus merely made answer that no one whom the Father did not draw by the sweet motions of His heavenly grace could come to the Son, and that no one could come to know the Father except through the Son, for it was written in the Prophets: "And they shall all be taught of God" (Isa. liv. 13). He then concluded this, the first part of His discourse, with the words: "Amen, amen, I say unto you; He that believeth in Me hath everlasting life": by which He would have us understand that a necessary predisposition to this heavenly bread is a lively faith.

Promise of the Blessed Eucharist.

Passing on to the second part of His discourse, He fully explained what that Bread of Life was which He was about to bestow upon mankind in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. He declared, in the first place, that He was the Bread of Eternal Life, and mentioned its several properties; and, in the second place, He applied to His own person and to His own flesh the idea of this Bread, such as He had defined it. He no longer called the belief in Him, or the preaching of the Gospel, the Bread that He would give

them, but declared that it was His own flesh, that same flesh which was to be given for the life of the world: "I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the Bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; and the Bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world." Our Saviour here promised what He afterwards instituted and gave us at His last supper. He promised to give us His body and blood, the same body, though given in a different manner, that He would offer on the cross for the redemption of the world.

Jesus confirms His promise.

The Jews who were present took scandal at this, and asked: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Notwithstanding their murmurs, and the offence which His words had given even to many of His disciples, Jesus was so far from revoking or expounding His words, or of suggesting that He had but spoken in a figurative or metaphorical sense, that He even confirmed the same truth in the clearest and strongest terms. Had His words been used metaphorically, He would have been understood at once, since, in the language of the Jews, "to eat one's flesh" means "to calumniate." They must, therefore, here have their literal meaning; for, whereas the Jews said it was impossible that He should give them His flesh to eat, He answered by telling them that, so far from its being impossible, it was necessary that they should eat it: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day; for My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath

sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me. This is the Bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever." These things He said as He taught in the synagogue at Capharnaum.

The precept of receiving the body and blood of Christ is insinuated in the foregoing words, and to the worthy receiver is promised life eternal. Had our Lord by His words about eating His flesh wished to say nothing else than that His disciples should be filled with His doctrine, He would not have said anything hard to believe, neither would He have shocked the Jews. He had already said as much in the former part of His discourse. But, notwithstanding their complaints, He went on to impress in still stronger terms the necessity of eating His flesh; and, as they were ignorant how He would or could fulfil His promise, they left Him, as likewise did many of His disciples, murmuring: "This saying is hard, and who can hear it?" Then Jesus, turning to the Twelve, asked: "Will you also go away?" thus leaving them to their free choice whether to follow Him and believe this mystery, or withdraw from Him. Peter, who knew that our Lord was able to make good His words, however hard and difficult they might seem to others, at once made answer in the name of the Twelve: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." The Apostles here give the plain but noble motive of their faith: they believe our Lord because He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, who is absolutely incapable of deceiving His creatures, and whose power is perfectly equal to perform whatever promise He may make them.

Many disciples leave Jesus. Peter's answer for the Twelve.

Doubtless to guard His Apostles against self-confidence, and to administer a warning to one in whose heart the

evil passion of avarice had already begun to take deep root, our Lord turned to them and said: "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Now, He meant Judas Iscariot, who was about to betray Him.

Our Lord's warning.

As, with the promise of our Lord to give us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink, the second year of His public ministry was brought to a close, so was the last closed by the fulfilment of that promise. The Third Passover after His baptism did not, as is generally supposed, find Him at Jerusalem. He did not go there probably because He knew that the Jews would seek to kill Him, and His hour was not yet come.

End of the second year's ministry.

PART V

THIRD YEAR OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS—FROM THE THIRD PASCH TILL HIS TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

A.D. 29—30.

"And they that sought evils to Me spoke vain things, and studied deceits all the day long" (Ps. xxxvii. 13).

"All the day long they detested My words: all their thoughts were against Me unto evil" (Ps. lv. 6).

CHAPTER XXV

THE SCRIBES AND THE PHARISEES QUESTION OUR LORD—THE SYROPHOENICIAN WOMAN—THE SECOND MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES

Matt. XV., XVI.; Mark VII., VIII.

"Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips glorify Me, but their heart is far from Me, and they have feared Me with the commandment and doctrines of men" (Isa. xxix. 13).

Our Lord persecuted by His enemies.

JUDAEA we have seen treating our Lord as a foe to be dreaded; in Jerusalem feeling was so strong against Him that He could not trust Himself to go there for the celebration of the Pasch; and, as time passed, not only did Judaea reject Him, but the people of Capharnaum broke out into angry murmurs against Him; and soon we shall find Him compelled to cross the Jordan to wander for safety in pagan territory. The violence of the people of Capharnaum was not yet so pronounced as to prove an immediate

danger, since it was in their midst that we find Him on the return of the pilgrims from Jerusalem after the Feast of the Passover. But from this time the spies sent by the Scribes and the Pharisees begin to press Him more vehemently and persistently.

Pharisaic ablutions and formalism.

Many of those who had followed Him, merely for the purpose of watching Him and ensnaring Him in His words, came to Him on one occasion to find fault with His disciples, complaining that they had seen them sit down to table with unwashed hands, and asking Him why they did not walk according to the precepts and traditions of the ancients. Jesus answered them: "Well did Isaias prophesy of you, hypocrites: This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain do they worship Me, teaching doctrines and precepts of men." Their complaint He met with a counter-charge: "Well do you make void the commandment of God that you may keep your own tradition; for Moses said: Honour thy father and thy mother; and he that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death. But you say: "If a man shall say to his father or mother, Corban (which is a gift), whatsoever is from me shall profit thee. And further, you suffer him not to do anything for his father or mother, making void the word of God by your tradition which you have given forth. And many other such like things you do."

"Corban," a gift vowed to God.

Thus, if a son said to his father or mother: "Whatsoever is mine I have promised to give to the Temple; therefore, since I am bound by my promise, I cannot help you"; the word *Corban* (a gift, a thing vowed to God) once uttered, the vow was considered irrevocable. This tradition of the Pharisees was calculated to enrich themselves by exempting children from giving any further assistance to their

parents, after they had once offered to the Temple and to the priests that which should have gone to the support of their parents. But such an offering was a violation of the law of God and of Nature, and is here condemned by our Saviour. In most cases they who made it committed a double crime, since they neither offered the gift to God nor succoured their parents in their distress.

When Jesus saw His enemies withdraw in confusion, He summoned the people that were standing around to approach nearer, and explained to them that no uncleanness in meat, nor any defilement contracted by eating it with unwashed hands, can of itself and by its own nature defile the soul. That is caused by sin alone, or by disobedience of the heart to the ordinance and will of God. "Out of the heart," He said, "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, and blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man." Referring to the traditions of the Pharisees here in question, He concluded with the declaration that these regulations, invented by man but reprobated by God, must disappear: "Every plant that My Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let the Pharisees alone: they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit."

The Syro-Phoenician woman.

Going from Capharnaum, He retired into the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, and, entering into a house, He wished His Apostles not to make known His presence. But the report of His arrival was soon spread abroad; for, while He was on the way thither, a certain Syrophoenician woman, whose daughter was troubled by an unclean spirit, having heard of His coming, went to Him, and, falling down at His feet, besought Him to come and heal her daughter. At first Jesus made no reply, but passed on. Soon His disciples came up to Him and asked Him to send her away, for she

continued to cry after Him. Our Saviour refused to hear the woman, not through any contempt for her, but only to show that His mission was in the first instance to the Jews, and to invigorate her faith. He therefore said: "I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel." "Lord, help me!" she again cried out. Jesus answered her: "Suffer first the children to be filled; for it is not good to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs." "Yea, Lord," she said, "for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their master." He could resist no longer. To teach us how powerful with God is earnest and fervent prayer, He turned to the woman, and in words of tenderest pity exclaimed: "O woman, great is thy faith; be it done to thee as thou wilt." Full of joy, the poor mother returned to her home to find that her daughter had been cured at that same hour.

A deaf and dumb man healed.

Departing from the border-land of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon into the district bordering the upper reaches of the Jordan, whence He descended to Decapolis, the country lying to the east of the Sea of Galilee and stretching thence towards the north and the south. Here the fame of His miracles had been spread by the Gerasene demoniac, out of whom He had driven the legion of devils; and no sooner had the people heard of His coming than they brought to Him a deaf and dumb man, and besought Him to lay His hands upon him. Jesus, taking the man aside from the multitude, put His finger into his ears, and with a little saliva touched his tongue. Then, with eyes raised heavenwards, He groaned and said: "Ephpheta!" that is, "Be thou opened!" Immediately the man's ears were opened, the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke aright. Although Jesus charged the people not to make known the miracle, they were so filled with admiration at what

they themselves had witnessed that "the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal did they publish it, saying: 'He hath done all things well: He hath made the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.'"

Jesus feeds the four thousand.

After this, Jesus spent three days teaching and healing many in a desert spot in the country of Decapolis. It was there, too, that He repeated the miracle of feeding a vast multitude with a few loaves and fishes. The small supplies of food which the people had brought with them when they came out to Him had long been exhausted, and He was unwilling to dismiss them fasting to their own homes; for He said: "They will faint in the way, because some of them have come from afar off." On inquiring of His disciples how much bread they still had left, they told Him that there remained but seven loaves together with a few small fishes. He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground, when, taking the seven loaves and the fishes, He gave thanks and blessed them, and commanded His disciples to distribute them among the people. They that ate numbered four thousand men, without counting women and children; and after all had had their fill, seven baskets of fragments were left.

Second demand for a sign.

Jesus dismissed the people, and shortly afterwards walked down to the shore, whence He sailed with His disciples over to Magedan (*Magdala*) into the district of Dalmanutha. Here He was met by a number of Pharisees and Sadducees, who, mistrusting the miracles He had hitherto wrought, asked of Him a sign from heaven to convince them that He was Christ, the Messias. But Jesus refused to gratify their curiosity, and answered them as He had answered on a similar occasion. No other sign should be given them, He said, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. He gave them to understand that they needed no special miracle to

lead them to a belief in Him, and upbraided them for their wilful blindness; for while they well knew how to make observations regarding the weather from external appearances in the heavens, they neglected to notice the many predictions and signs which so plainly manifested Him to be the promised Messias. So he left them with the prophecy of His Resurrection; and, entering the ship, crossed again to the other side of the lake.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BLIND MAN AT BETHSAIDA—ST. PETER'S CONFESSION OF FAITH—THE TRANSFIGURATION

Matt. XVI., XVII.; Mark VIII., IX.; Luke IX.

"The Lord hath said to Me: Thou art My Son" (Ps. ii. 7).

Warning against the leaven of the Pharisees.

Arrived on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, the disciples began to be concerned about food, for they had forgotten to bring a supply with them, and found that they had only one loaf. Therefore, on Jesus' warning them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and of the leaven of Herod, they supposed that He was cautioning them against touching the bread of the Pharisees. Jesus, knowing this, said to them: "Why do you think within yourselves, O ye of little faith, for that you have no bread? Do you not yet understand? Do you not remember after the feeding of the five thousand how many baskets of fragments you took up, and how many after the four thousand had eaten?" He then explained to them that it was not of bread that He spoke when He told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but of their doctrine. Again, we read

in St. Luke: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (xii. 1). The Pharisees, as we have seen, had made the word of God of no effect by their tradition. The Sadducees, by denying a future state, removed the foundations of the fear of God, while the Herodians were noted for a spirit of worldliness and ungodliness.

The blind man at Bethsaida Julias.

Jesus now passed on to Bethsaida Julias, where He healed a blind man. He took the poor sufferer by the hand, and led him out of the town that He might perform the cure unnoticed. After moistening the man's eyes with spittle, He laid His hands on them, and asked him if he saw anything. The man raised his eyes and answered: "I see men, as it were trees, walking." Then, as though to make the man more sensible of the benefit that was being conferred upon him, and that his faith might be strengthened and matured by his cure being effected gradually, Jesus again touched his eyes and restored him to perfect sight, so that he saw all things clearly. "Go now," Jesus bade him, "into thy house, and, if thou enter into the town, tell nobody."

Peter's confession.

When Jesus with His disciples had come near to Caesarea Philippi, a city which marked the most northern limit of His travels, He asked them what was the opinion of men with regard to Him, and whom they took Him to be. They answered that some believed Him to be John the Baptist, others Elias, while others again said He was Jeremias or one of the Prophets. But on His asking whom *they* thought that He was, Peter, in the name of all, and without hesitation, answered: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven.

And I say to Thee: Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

The rock of the Church.

In this solemn promise to St. Peter, our Lord constitutes him the head of His Church, the rock upon which, as a foundation, His Church was to be built. That foundation, moreover, was to be so firm that the powers of hell should never prevail against it; for, if they overturned the foundation, they would overturn also the Church that rested upon it. His words also contain the promise to St. Peter that he and his successors shall be to the end of time, that is, as long as His Church shall last, its supreme pastors and princes.

Jesus foretells His Passion for the first time.

After commanding His disciples not yet to declare that He was the Messias, although we have seen the Twelve sent to publish His coming, He for the first time began to tell them of His sufferings and His Resurrection. He must go to Jerusalem, He said, to suffer many things from the ancients and the Scribes and the chief priests, and be put to death; but on the third day He would rise again. Out of tender love and zeal for his Divine Master, Peter began to expostulate with Him, and, as it were, to reprehend Him, saying: "Lord, be it far from Thee; this shall not be unto Thee!" For this, Jesus turned to him and rebuked him sternly: "Go behind Me, Satan! Thou savourest not the things that are of God, but that are of men;" thus making him to understand that his judgment in this particular was not conformable with that of God. Then, to teach us that His followers must not expect, because they have confessed

Him, that the rest of their days are to be spent in idleness and pleasure, He said to His disciples: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." He told them, moreover, that whosoever acted against duty and conscience to save the life of his body should lose eternal life; and whosoever made the sacrifice of his life, or of the comforts and convenience of life for conscience' sake, should be rewarded with eternal life: "For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then will He render to every man according to his works. He that shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man shall be ashamed when He shall come in His majesty." Then did He promise that some of those who were standing there and listening to Him should not taste death till they should see the kingdom of God; referring, doubtless, to His Church after His Resurrection and Ascension, when He would be recognised as the Redeemer of the world; or, as some suppose, to His Transfiguration, which was so soon to take place.

The Mount of Transfiguration.

After six full days from this discourse, Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and went with them up a high mountain to pray,—a mountain generally believed to be that of Thabor in Galilee. Many, however, are of opinion that Libanus, or some mountain belonging to the Hermon range, is here indicated, or perhaps a mountain near to Caesarea Philippi. It was of Libanus, moreover, that Isaias prophesied: "The glory of Libanus is given to it, the beauty of Carmel and Saron; they shall see the glory of our God" (xxxv. 2). Jesus had already given His disciples some foreknowledge of His sufferings; now, to strengthen their

courage, which might falter in the hour of trial, He vouchsafed to them a glimpse of the glory that should follow it, a glimpse of the happy change which the bodies of His elect should undergo at the general resurrection.

The Transfiguration.

As the three Apostles prayed, their eyes became heavy with sleep; and when they awoke they beheld Jesus before them. His face shone as the sun; His garments were white as snow, and Moses and Elias were seen conversing with Him. They spoke of the death He was to undergo in Jerusalem. Peter was so overcome with joy at the glorious sight that, not knowing what he said, he exclaimed: "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from it was heard a Voice, saying: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." At the sound of these words the Apostles fell prostrate on the ground, and a great fear came over them, until they were reassured by the approach of Jesus, who touched them and bade them rise and be not afraid. When they rose up, they found that the cloud had vanished, and that Jesus was standing there alone. He commanded them to tell the vision to no man till after His Resurrection, and with them proceeded to descend the mountain; but they understood not what Jesus implied by His rising from the dead, and pondered and questioned among themselves what He could mean.

Moses and Elias.

By ministering to our Lord in His glory, Moses and Elias, who represent the Law and the Prophets, showed Him to be the Lord both of the Old and of the New Testament. Both bear testimony to the Divinity of His Mission, which was effectually to close the old and open the new dispensation.

CHAPTER XXVII

CHRIST CURES THE DEMONIAC CHILD—RETURNS TO CAPHARNAUM—PAYS THE TRIBUTE—DISCOURSES ON HUMILITY, SCANDAL, AND FORBEARANCE

Matt. XVII., XVIII.; Mark IX.; Luke IX.

"Behold I will send you Elias the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. iv. 5).

"The angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them" (Ps. xxxiii. 8).

"Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed" (Ps. lxxxiv. 11).

The forerunners of Christ's coming.

As they descended the mountain together, the Apostles asked our Lord what it was that the Scribes and the Pharisees meant when they said that Elias must come down first. Jesus gave them to understand that Elias would come again in person before the second coming of the Son of Man in power and majesty to judge all mankind, and would re-establish all things, by which it is commonly supposed that He meant the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith. The Jews had confounded the two comings of Jesus Christ. The Baptist, in the spirit of Elias, was to precede the first—indeed, he had already come; while Elias, whose return in person would betoken the last days of the world, was to appear again on earth before His second coming. Jesus then, in a most beautiful manner, took advantage of this conversation to remind them of His future Passion, and from the recollection of the sufferings of John the Baptist to prepare them for His own: "Elias is already come, and they knew him not, but have done to him whatsoever they had a mind. So also the Son of Man shall suffer from them."

The lunatic child cured.

As they were nearing the foot of the mountain they saw a great multitude gathered round the other disciples, and the Scribes disputing with them; but no sooner did they see Jesus approaching than they came forward to meet and salute Him. Jesus asked what might be the subject of dispute that had given rise to such heated altercation. Before the disciples could find words to answer Him, owing to their excited state of mind, a man's voice was heard from the midst of the crowd, exclaiming: "Master, I have brought my son having a dumb spirit to Thee, who, wheresoever he taketh him, dasheth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spoke to Thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not." "O unbelieving and perverse generation," said Jesus, "how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring thy son hither to me." The man pushed his way through the crowd, leading his son with him; but as soon as they were come into our Lord's presence, the evil spirit threw the boy down on the ground, where he rolled about, foaming at the mouth. "How long is it since this hath happened to him?" asked Jesus. The distressed father answered by recounting to our Saviour the whole story of his son's affliction, and ended by supplicating Him to have mercy on them and to help them. "If thou canst believe," Jesus said, "all things are possible to him that believeth." With tears in his eyes the poor man cried out: "I do believe, Lord; help my unbelief." Jesus then threatened the unclean spirit, and said: "Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him, and enter no more into him!" Uttering a loud cry, the devil went out of him, leaving him as one lifeless. The people were filled with awe, and said one to another: "The child is dead." But Jesus, taking him by the hand, raised him up and restored him whole and sound to his delighted father.

When they were come into a certain house, the Apostles asked Jesus in secret how it was that they had been unable to cast out the evil spirit. He told them that their failure was due to their want of faith—which had probably failed them on account of the difficulty of the cure—and that, if they had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, they might say to this mountain: "Remove from hence to yonder place!" and it would be removed. By perfect faith even the greatest difficulties could be surmounted. In fact, nothing would be impossible to them. "But," He added, "this kind of evil spirit is not cast out except by faith supported by prayer and fasting."

Jesus again foretells His Passion.

Once more He spoke to them, in the plainest terms, of His death and Passion: "The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again." But His disciples did not understand the mystery of His sufferings, and failed to see how these things could befall Him; yet did they fear to ask Him for an explanation, and remained exceedingly troubled by reason of His words. They could not get rid of the idea which had grown up with them, that when the Messias came He would establish a prosperous worldly kingdom.

Tribute money miraculously provided.

On their return to Capharnaum, Peter was asked by the collectors of the *didrachma** whether his Master paid the tax or not. Peter answered in the affirmative; but when they came into the house, Jesus said to him: "What is thy opinion, Simon? The kings of the earth, of whom do they receive tribute or custom? of their own children or of strangers?" "Of strangers," Peter answered. "Then," said our Saviour, "the children are free." But, to avoid giving scandal, He

* The *didrachma* was equal to half a shekel, a coin of the value of 1s. 4d., and is supposed to have been levied on every person of twenty years of age, for the service of the Temple.

directed Peter to pay the tribute. "Go," He said, "to the sea, and cast in a hook; and that fish which shall first come up, take; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a *stater*: take that, and give it to them for Me and thee." The piece of money, then, a *stater*, which Peter was to find in the fish's mouth, was equal to a *shekel* (*sicle*), and therefore was the precise amount of the tax for his Master and himself. The exemption which Jesus claimed, though He waived it lest He should offend the Jews, may be regarded as an assertion of His Divinity. His argument therefore is, if the kings of the earth exact money from their subjects only, and exempt their own children, how much more ought He to be exempt, who claimed His descent, not from a temporal prince only, but from the supreme King of Heaven, the Lord of the Temple. He, however, paid the tribute, not as one subject to the Law, but as consulting the infirmity of the people; yet He first showed Himself exempt from it, lest His disciples might take occasion of scandal therefrom; since, by His not paying it, they might consider that He was not a true Israelite; or, by His paying it, that He was a mere man. "Jesus, the Son of Man, would obey the laws and pay the tribute; but He paid it even as God, by a miracle."* It should be noticed that He paid not only for Himself, but for the future representative of Him and His Church.

Instructions in humility.

While on their way from the Mount of Transfiguration to Capharnaum, the disciples had disputed among themselves, when apart from our Lord, which of them should be the greatest in His kingdom. When they were come into the house He asked them what had been the subject of their conversation; whereupon they were confused and held their peace. But seeing the thoughts of their hearts, and wishing to teach

* Abbé Fouard.

them that the kingdom of heaven is the reward, not of ambition, but of simplicity and humility, He set a little child in the midst of them as a pattern for their imitation. "Whosoever," He said, "shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven; and he that shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me; and whosoever shall receive Me receiveth Him that sent Me: for he that is the lesser among you all, he is the greater."

The words of Jesus, bidding them receive children in His name, called from St. John the remark: "Master, we saw a man casting out devils in Thy name, who followed not us, and we forbade him." But Jesus said: "Do not forbid him; for there is no man that doth a miracle in My name, and can soon speak ill of Me; for he that is not against you is for you. For whosoever shall give you to drink a cup of water in My name, because you belong to Christ, amen I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Scandals.

"And whosoever shall scandalise one of these little ones"—*i.e.*, shall by his evil doctrine or example draw others into sinful ways, or by putting a stumbling-block in their way shall cause them to fall into sin—"it were better for him if a mill-stone were hung about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals! It must needs be that scandals come*; but, nevertheless, woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh!" Moreover, to make us sensible that we must quit and renounce what is most dear to us, sooner than remain in the danger of offending God, He continued: "And if thy hand or thy foot scandalise thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to go into life maimed or lame, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting

* Owing to the wickedness and corruption of the world.

fire. And if thy eye scandalise thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee having one eye to enter life, than having two eyes to be cast into the fire of hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished." Then, referring, as many believe, to quite another fire, the fire of Divine charity, He added: "Every one shall be salted with fire; and every victim shall be salted with salt. Salt is good. But if the salt become unsavoury, wherewith will you season it? Have salt in you."

The value of a soul.

To show us how precious in the sight of God is the soul of one of the least of His children, He continued: "See that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father who is in heaven." From these words of our Lord we observe the dignity of the humble and little whom the world despises. They have angels constantly pleading their cause in God's presence. They are now weak and unable to defend themselves, but they have their advocates in heaven, accusing those who offer them any injury or scandal. "What think you?" He said. "If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the mountains, and go to seek that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he find it, amen I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that than for the ninety-nine that went not astray. Even so it is the will of your Father who is in heaven that not one of these little ones should perish." Here do we see our Lord manifesting His tender regard and kindly solicitude for us poor weak creatures. Nay, did He not Himself become man, and, in some measure, thus abandon the angels who are in heaven, that He might save by His death that which was lost?

He not only instructed His disciples on the duty of

fraternal correction and the order it was to take, but also on the necessity incumbent on every one to submit to the judgment of the Church; while the power of binding and loosing, which in a more eminent manner was promised to St. Peter, He now also promised to the other Apostles and their successors, the bishops and priests of His Church: "Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven." Then, speaking of such as were gathered together in His name and authority, and in the unity of His Church, He pronounced this excellent promise: "If two of you shall agree upon earth concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

The power of binding and loosing extended to all the Apostles.

After speaking of this interest of God towards man, Jesus next reminded His hearers of the charity and forbearance they must exercise towards one another. When St. Peter asked if he should forgive as often as *seven times* one who offended against him, our Lord, to show how much He esteemed charity, immediately answered: "Not only seven times, but seventy times seven times": as though He would say we must forgive to the end, and never take revenge how often soever our brother may offend against us. To recommend this great virtue more forcibly He subjoins the parable of the king going over his accounts; and from the great severity there exercised towards the unmerciful servant, He intimates how rigid will be His Heavenly Father towards those who forgive not their enemies. "The kingdom of heaven," He said, "is likened to a king who took an account of his servants. And when he had begun to take the account, one was brought

Forbearance and forgiveness.

to him that owed ten thousand talents. And as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. But that servant, falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant, being moved with pity, let him go, and forgave him all the debt. But when that servant was gone out, he found one of his fellow-servants that owed him a hundred pence; and laying hold of him, he throttled him, saying: Pay what thou owest. And his fellow-servant, falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison till he paid the debt. Now his fellow-servants, seeing what was done, were very much grieved, and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him, and said: Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me. Shouldst not thou then have had compassion also on thy fellow-servant, even as I had compassion on thee? And his lord, being angry, delivered him to the torturers until he paid all the debt. So also shall My Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from his heart."

Our forgiveness, then, must be real, not pretended; from the heart, and not in word and appearance only. All anger, hatred, and resentment must be sacrificed at the shrine of charity. This discourse our Lord concluded with the gentle exhortation: "Have peace among you."

CHAPTER XXVIII

JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES — THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY

John VII., VIII.

"All you that thirst come to the waters: you shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains" (Isa. xii. 3, lv. 1).

Jesus goes to the Feast of Tabernacles.

When the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand, some of our Lord's relatives, who did not as yet fully believe in Him, pressed Him to go to Jerusalem, that, by His miracles in Judaea, He might give a more open proof of His mission. He told them that His time was not yet come, that the world hated Him, but bade them go up to the Feast without Him. He Himself stayed behind for a few days, and then went up, but, as it were, in private, after the first part of the Festival was over.

The people seek Jesus.

Meanwhile His character was the subject of much animated discussion in Jerusalem. To show how keenly His presence at the Festival was expected, men were constantly asking: "Where is He?" Many and contradictory were the opinions expressed concerning Him. Some asserted that He was a good man, others that He was a seducer of the people; but none durst take His part openly, however favourable might be their sentiments towards Him, for the rulers hated and persecuted such as sided with Him.

Jesus teaches in the Temple.

Without being recognised, Jesus entered Jerusalem, and, in the midst of the Feast, suddenly appeared teaching in the Temple. The Jews were astounded at His wisdom and the power of His teaching, and asked: "How doth this man know letters, having never learned?" Jesus Himself deigned to

inform them of the source of His knowledge, saying: "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do the will of Him, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true, and there is no injustice in him." Then, referring to their conduct in seeking His life for having healed the sick man on the Sabbath-day at the Pool of Bethsaida, He reminded them that they were the real transgressors of the Law of Moses, which commanded that they should not kill. Furthermore, if He healed on the Sabbath-day, did they not give circumcision and cure the wound on that day? "Why then do you seek to kill Me?" He asked. "Are you angry because I have healed the whole man on the Sabbath? Judge not according to appearance, but judge just judgment."

The people are divided in opinion.

The people expressed their wonder at hearing Him speak so openly. They asked whether the chief priests and the elders believed that He was indeed the Christ; whereas they themselves looked upon Him as no more than a man, for they knew His mother and kindred: "but when the Christ cometh," they said, "no man knoweth whence He is." Jesus then cried out: "You both know Me, and you know whence I am, and I am not come of Myself; but He that sent Me is true, whom you know not. I know Him, because I am from Him, and He hath sent Me." Filled with anger at hearing Him speak thus, they sought to apprehend Him; but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come. Yet many of the people, seeing the miracles that He performed, believed in Him, "For when the Christ cometh," they said, "shall He do more miracles than these which this man doth?" More enraged than ever to see the progress He was making in

the favour of the people, the Pharisees and the chief priests at length sent officers to seize Him, and to bring Him before them. In the meantime Jesus continued to discourse in language which, to the unbelieving minds of His enemies, was perplexing in the extreme. "Yet a little while," He said, "I am with you, and then I go to Him that sent Me. You shall seek Me, and shall not find Me; and where I am, thither you cannot come." They therefore asked one another: "Whither will He go that we shall not find Him? Will He go to the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?"

The rulers wish to seize Jesus.

On the last and most solemn day of the Feast, Jesus stood in the Temple, and with a loud voice cried out that if any man thirsted and would come to Him to drink, He would give him living water, that is, the gifts of the Holy Ghost which were promised to the faithful. Hereupon a discussion arose among the people. Some maintained that He was indeed the expected Prophet; some that He was the Christ; while others asked, "Doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Doth not Scripture say that He cometh of the seed of David, and out of Bethlehem, the town where David was?" Many were for carrying out the command of the Sanhedrim, and would have seized Him; yet no man ventured to lay hands upon Him. Nay, the officers even returned to those who had sent them, and excused themselves, saying: "Never did man speak like this man." "What," demanded the Pharisees, "are you also seduced? Hath any one of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in Him?" Thereupon one of their number, Nicodemus, who had long been a secret follower of our Lord, ventured to ask: "Doth our law judge any man, unless it first hear him, and know what he doth?" His question served but to draw upon himself the reproaches of the other members of the council, who turned to him and asked tauntingly: "Art thou also

a Galilean? Search the Scriptures, and see that out of Galilee a prophet riseth not."* As it was now evening, the Sanhedrim dispersed; the people also returned to their homes, while our Saviour retired to the Mount of Olives.

The woman taken in adultery.

When Jesus appeared in the Temple the following morning, the people flocked to Him to hear His teaching. It was then that the Scribes and the Pharisees, who had long sought to entrap Him in His words, prepared such a snare for Him that it appeared impossible that He should escape their cunning wiles. They brought to Him a woman whom they had taken in adultery, and set her in their midst. "Master," they said, "this woman was even now taken in adultery. Moses in the Law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest Thou?" Now, if our Lord had judged the woman worthy of death, His severity would have alienated from Him the favour of the people, who would have accused Him of cruelty,—and this His enemies were anxious to bring about; whereas, if He had acquitted her, they would have condemned Him as countenancing gross sin, and as one who disregarded the Law of Moses. His decision served but to increase their own confusion and shame. "The same law which adjudged the guilty to death required the witnesses, in token of their abhorrence of the crime, to cast the first stones. But who dared do this, if conscious that his guilt was the same? And such was the prevalent corruption that all the accusers were in the same case."† Without answering them, Jesus stooped down, and wrote with His finger upon the ground, as one that was musing about something else. As, however, they continued to question Him, and to insist upon an answer,

* Could they have been ignorant that Jonas and Nahum were from Galilee?

† Dr. Smith, "New Testament History," p. 244.

He rose up and said: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Stooping down once more, He again began to write. This time, many believe, it was their sins He was recording in the sand. "The perplexity was now shifted to them; for they would be obliged either to admit that they themselves were deserving of death, or to maintain that the Mosaic precept was no longer in force." They therefore began to slink away one by one, from the eldest down to the youngest, and left the woman standing alone in front of her merciful Judge, who, raising Himself up, said to her, "Where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee?" "No man, Lord," she answered. Jesus said to her: "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more."

The judgment of Jesus is given.

CHAPTER XXIX

CHRIST JUSTIFIES HIS DOCTRINE—GIVES SIGHT TO A MAN BORN BLIND—PARABLE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John VIII., IX., X.

"I will set up one Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them" (Ezech. xxxiv. 23).

"He was offered because it was His will, and He opened not His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7).

After silencing His wicked persecutors our Saviour continued His instructions to the people. He called Himself the Light of the world, and promised that if any man followed Him he should not walk in darkness. But when the Pharisees reproached Him with bearing witness to Himself, and hence tried to show that His testimony was not true, He met their accusation by asserting that, although He gave testimony

Jesus the Light of the world.

of Himself, His testimony was nevertheless true, because He was not alone in bearing it, but His Father, who also bore testimony of Him, was with Him; and reminded them that it was written in their Law that the testimony of two was true. He repeated that He would go away, and that they would seek Him, yet that they should not find Him, but should die in their sins. In spite of the undoubted proofs of His Divinity which He had given them, they still refused to own Him as the Messias; and because of their unbelief they were not destined to come to Him in the kingdom of His glory. But when they should have lifted up the Son of Man, that is, when they should have put Him to death on the cross, then should they know that He was the Messias, and that He spoke these things as the Father had taught Him.

Now, after He had spoken thus, many believed in Him, to whom He said: "If you continue in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." On their asserting that, as the children of Abraham, they were already free, and slaves to no man, He reminded them that such as live in sin are indeed slaves to sin,—that sin was bondage. Though they were of the race of Abraham, and in that sense could pretend to be his children, yet by making themselves slaves to sin and remaining in it, by refusing to believe in Him, the Messias, they were not the spiritual children of Abraham, nor could they inherit the promises made to Abraham. Then, to teach them that it was not only faith, but good works conjoined with faith, that made them true children of Abraham, He added: "If you be the children of Abraham, do the works of Abraham." He denounced them as children of the devil because they did the works of the devil, especially in seeking to kill Him who had spoken to them the truth which He had heard from God.

The eternal Godhead of Jesus.

When asked whether He pretended to be greater than Abraham and the Prophets who were dead, He replied: "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father that glorifieth Me, whom you say that He is your God. Abraham, your father, rejoiced that he might see My day: he saw it and was glad." "Thou art not yet fifty years old," they exclaimed, "and hast Thou seen Abraham?" This question won from our Saviour the solemn assertion of His eternal Godhead: "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made I AM." He does not say *before Abraham was made I was made*, but I AM; by which He would show His eternal, self-existent, Divine nature. So indignant were the Jews on hearing Him assume such a dignity to Himself that they sought stones to cast at Him as a blasphemer. But Jesus withdrew from the midst of the excited crowd and left the Temple.

Cure of the man born blind.

Once outside the Temple, Jesus found that He was unmolested, and was passing along one of the streets when He saw a man who had been blind from his birth begging. "Master," asked His disciples, "who hath sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus told them that this blindness was not inflicted in punishment of any sin either in the man or his parents, but it was sent him for the manifestation of the glory of God, whose works He must accomplish before the night of His death, which was fast drawing nigh, should come upon Him. "As long as I am in the world," He added, "I am the Light of the world." Having spoken thus, He spat upon the ground, and of the dust and the spittle made clay, with which He anointed the man's eyes; then He bade him go and wash in the pool of Siloë, a small reservoir to be seen to this day under the walls on the east side of the city. The man did as he was bidden, and returned seeing.

Those who had previously seen him blind were amazed, and asked: "Is not this he that sat and begged?" Some answered that he was indeed the same, while others asserted that he only resembled him. But when they questioned the man himself, he replied: "I am he," and recounted to them the manner in which his sight had been restored to him. "That man," He said, "who is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and bade me go to the pool of Siloë and wash. I went, I washed, and I see." The astonished neighbours brought the man to the Pharisees, whose envy and jealousy knew no bounds. They, however, seized upon the fact that the cure had been performed on the Sabbath-day to stir up enmity towards our Divine Saviour. They questioned the man; but he answered in the same simple way as before.

The man is taken to the Pharisees.

To many his words carried conviction; but there was a division among his hearers, some exclaiming: "This man who keepeth not the Sabbath is not of God"; whereas others asked: "How can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?" They then turned to him who had been blind, and demanded to know what he thought of the man who had opened his eyes. He at once answered: "He is a prophet." But they, still distrusting his account, sought to throw doubt on the reality of his former blindness, but only succeeded in making the fact of the miracle more evident than before. They then sent for his parents, and questioned them. But they, fearing to acknowledge that their son had been healed by our Lord, lest they should be cast out of the Synagogue, refused to express an opinion, and merely answered: "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now seeth we know not; or who hath opened his eyes we know not: ask himself. He is of age: let him speak for himself."

His parents questioned.

He is recalled, and expelled the Synagogue.

Upon this they recalled the man, and advised him to give glory to God and tell the truth, for they knew Jesus to be a sinner. "If He be a sinner," said he, "I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." Then, doubtless, in the hope that he might contradict himself, they asked him again to describe in what way he had recovered his sight. "Have I not told you already?" he answered. "Why would you hear me again? Will you also become His disciples?" They thereupon reviled him, and told him that they were the disciples of Moses; but that he was no disciple of Moses, if he believed in one whose origin they knew not. Far from being silenced by such an argument, he expressed surprise at their own unbelief, and said: "From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, He could not do anything." Exasperated beyond measure at the boldness and directness of his answers, they exclaimed indignantly: "Dost thou teach us?" and they expelled him from the Synagogue.

His profession of faith.

What in one sense was a loss to the man proved a great gain, since it made his faith in our Saviour complete. The Jews cast him out of their Synagogue, but Christ received him into His communion; for, when our Lord heard of what had taken place, He sought him out, and asked him if he believed in the Son of God. With ready eagerness the man asked: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" Jesus said to him: "Thou hast seen Him, and it is He who talketh with thee." "I believe, Lord," he answered; and, falling down, he adored Him.

"For judgment," said our Lord, "I am come into this world; that they who see not may see, and that they who see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees who were

present when our Lord gave utterance to these words took offence at them, as they clearly implied that, in consequence of His coming, and their refusing to believe in Him, they should, for their wilful blindness, be punished with the greatest severity. If they were blind through their ignorance in not having heard of Him and His doctrine, they might be excused for not believing; but as it was, having had opportunities of seeing, their sin remained.

Wilful blindness.

Jesus then proceeded to relate the parable in which He represents His Church as a fold, and His followers as sheep who enter the sheepfold, but by the door, Jesus Christ Himself; whereas, those who would enter not by the door, but would climb up another way, were thieves and robbers. By these latter He referred to false guides, such as the Pharisees, who did not act towards the sheep as God intended. His own sheep He leads by His instruction and example; and they follow Him, because they know His voice: "I am the door. If anyone enter by Me, he shall be saved; and he shall go in and go out, and shall find pastures. The thief cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they may have life, and have it abundantly." Those, then, who would teach without being sent, who have not their mission from God, are thieves and robbers, and the sheep hear them not.

Christ is the door.

He went on to represent Himself as the Good Shepherd who exposes Himself to every danger to defend His sheep from the attacks of the wolves, who even gives His life for them. Whereas the hireling, he that is not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, when he sees the wolf coming, abandons the sheep, and flies at the approach of danger, leaving the sheep to be torn to pieces and scattered by the wolf. "I am the Good Shepherd," He said; "I know

Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Mine, and Mine know Me. Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."

Christ's sacrifice for our redemption.

He next spoke of the great voluntary sacrifice which He, made Man for the redemption of the world, was about to complete: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. No man taketh it away from Me; but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of My Father." This commandment, then, He, as man, received from His Father, whose work He was ready to accomplish by the sacrifice of His own life; hence the words of St. Paul: "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross" (Phil. ii. 8). Again, there arose a contention among the Jews on account of His words. Some said: "He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear you Him?" whereas others replied: "These are not the words of one that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

Soon after this Jesus departed from Jerusalem, and returned for a little while into Galilee.

CHAPTER XXX

MISSION OF THE SEVENTY-TWO · DISCIPLES—PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN—JESUS AT THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AND MARY

Luke X.

"Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon" (Ps. xc. 13).

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength" (Deut. vi. 5).

Final departure of Jesus from Galilee.

This time our Lord's stay in Galilee was short indeed. When the Feast of Dedication* drew nigh, He took His final departure from that province to go up to Jerusalem by way of Samaria, sending messengers before Him to prepare what was necessary in the way of provisions and lodging. When Jesus and His disciples came to a certain city, the inhabitants refused to let them enter because they were Jews; whereupon James and John, the sons of Zebedee, would have had our Lord call down fire from heaven, as Elias had done, to destroy the city in punishment of the insult. But Jesus rebuked their too great zeal, and, upbraiding them for entertaining this feeling of revenge, said: "You know not of what spirit you are."

Mission of the Seventy-two.

During His progress through Samaria He selected seventy-two of His disciples, whom He sent, two and two, to all the towns and villages through which He intended to pass. He gave them power, not only to preach and to teach, but to cure diseases and to cast out devils, and told them that He was sending them as lambs among wolves. The instructions He gave them were identical with those given on a similar

* This festival was celebrated in December, nearly three months after the Feast of Tabernacles.

occasion when He sent out the Twelve. At the close of their mission they returned, and announced with joy the result of their labours. "Lord," they said, "the devils also are subject to us in Thy name." Wishing, doubtless, to give them a lesson in humility, and to check any vain complacency that might arise in their minds from the miracles they had wrought, He said to them: "I saw Satan as lightning falling from heaven. Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. But rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you; but rather that your names are written in heaven."

A Doctor of the Law tempts Jesus.

Shortly after the return of the Seventy-two, a certain Doctor of the Law, who wished to try our Saviour with hard questions, came to Him and asked: "Master, what must I do to possess eternal life?" Instead of answering him directly, Jesus put a counter-question: "What is written in the Law? How readest thou?" The man answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." "Thou hast answered right," said our Saviour to him; "this do, and thou shalt live." "But who is my neighbour?" further asked the Lawyer, wishing to justify himself, that is, wishing to show that, so far from being trivial, his first question was one that contained a real difficulty. To teach him that every one who has need of our assistance is to be counted as a neighbour, Jesus related the following parable.

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who stripped him, and then went away, leaving him half-dead. A priest, who chanced to be travelling that way, saw the wounded man, but passed on

without offering him assistance. In like manner also a Levite saw him, and heartlessly passed by without extending a helping hand. But soon after that a Samaritan rode up; and when he saw the sad condition of the man, his heart was moved to pity, and he at once got down from his beast to go to the relief of the poor sufferer. He dressed his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, set him upon his own beast, and conveyed him to an inn. Arrived there, he gave the host money wherewith to procure what was necessary for the man's comfort, and promised that, on his return, he would pay him whatever might be owing over and above what he had already given him. Now, which of these three, in thy opinion, was neighbour to him that fell among the robbers?" The Lawyer answered: "He that showed mercy to him." "Go," said our Saviour, "and do thou in like manner."

Parable of the Good Samaritan.

During this sojourn of our Lord in Judaea, one house seems to have been especially favoured by His sacred presence—the happy home of Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary. This was situated in the village of Bethany, which is built on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. It was about this time that our Lord paid that visit to this favoured home in which the Fathers find so clearly illustrated those different states of life, the active and the contemplative, figured by Martha and Mary. Martha, who appears to have received our Lord immediately on His arrival, began to busy herself in providing the necessary hospitality for her Divine guest; while Mary placed herself at His feet, and sat attentively listening to the words which fell from His sacred lips. Martha was displeased that Mary should leave the work to her, and thus complained to our Saviour: "Lord, hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me." Jesus assured her that her anxiety was un-

Martha and Mary.

necessary, and said to her: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her."

CHAPTER XXXI

DISCIPLES TAUGHT HOW TO PRAY—JESUS AT THE HOUSE OF A PHARISEE—PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG-TREE

Luke XI., XII., XIII.

"If thou have much, give abundantly: if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little. . . . For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness" (Tob. iv. 9, 11).

How we are to pray.

On leaving Bethany, our Lord passed beyond the Jordan into Peraea, then ruled by Herod Antipas, where we find Him instructing His disciples not only on the necessity of prayer, but again teaching them the form that their prayer should take. As in the Sermon on the Mount He had taught them the Our Father, or the Lord's Prayer, so on this occasion He repeated for their instruction a similar prayer, with the omission of two out of the seven petitions. "When you pray," He enjoined them, "say: Father, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."

The necessity of perseverance in prayer.

Having taught His disciples this prayer, He went on to show them the utility and efficacy of prayer in general; and to inculcate, by means of the following parable, the necessity of perseverance in it: "Which of you shall go at midnight to a friend who has retired for the night, and ask him to lend you bread be-

cause a friend of yours has unexpectedly arrived from a long journey, and you have nothing to set before him. Should your request be refused, because of the unseasonableness of the hour, and you continue to knock, would he not rise, and would you not obtain by perseverance what would never have been granted without it? I say to you: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you; for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Thus would God have us pray with zeal and perseverance; thus would He have us importune Him. St. Augustine says that God would not exhort us so earnestly to pray, if He were not ready to grant our petitions, and that He is more ready to give than we are to receive. "And which of you," continued our Saviour, "if he ask his father for bread, will he give him a stone? or a fish, will he give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion? If you then being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him?"

Jesus invited to dine by a Pharisee.

About this time Jesus, having been invited by one of the Pharisees to dine with him, went to his house; and while they reclined at table, the Pharisee wondered within himself that Jesus should eat without having first washed His hands. But Jesus, who knew his thoughts, and that the Pharisees were ever lying in wait to catch Him in His words or actions, took occasion to condemn in forcible language their principal vices, particularly their hypocrisy and false devotion; their boundless ambition and insatiable avarice; their false zeal and ignorance in deciding upon cases of conscience. Making use of a similitude, He told them that they made clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but that within their own hearts they were full of

extortion, iniquity, and uncleanness; thus showing them that they did all their actions on purpose to be seen by men, and that this was their only motive in all they did. "Foolish men," He continued, "did not He who made that which is without make also that which is within?" Then, to show them that it was not by washing in common water that they could take out the stains of their souls, but by works of charity, He enjoined them to add alms-giving to their other good works: "But yet that which remaineth, give alms; and behold all things are clean unto you."

Jesus upbraids the Lawyers.

Hereupon a certain lawyer, who was also present, complained to our Saviour, because in saying these things He reproached them. "Woe to you lawyers also," Jesus responded, "because you load men with burdens which they cannot bear, and you yourselves touch not the packs with one of your fingers. Woe to you who build the monuments of the Prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly you bear witness that you consent to the doings of your fathers." Not that our Lord blamed as a thing in itself evil the building or the adorning of the monuments of the Prophets, but He would condemn the hypocrisy of those who pretended to honour the memory of the Prophets, while at the same time they ceased not to persecute Him who was the Lord of the Prophets. "Woe to you lawyers," He added, "for you have taken away the key of knowledge: you yourselves have not entered in, and those that were entering you have hindered." They pretended, as masters and teachers, to open and expound the Law and the Prophets, yet, owing to their false doctrines and interpretations, they neither observed the Law, nor permitted others to observe it. After this they tried to entrap Him in His words, that they might bring an accusation against Him.

Yet did He continue to warn His disciples to beware of

the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, and to put them on their guard against cupidity and the fear of the world. At the very moment when He was teaching disinterestedness and the contempt of riches, He was interrupted by a man who begged of Him to interfere in a temporal concern, saying, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." "Who hath made Me judge among you?" answered our Lord. "Take heed and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth."

Warnings against hypocrisy and covetousness.

In further admonishing His hearers against the folly of riches, He narrated the Parable of the Foolish Rich Man, who, seeing the plentiful crops that his fields had produced, was at a loss where to store them. "This will I do," he said within himself: "I will pull down my barns and will build greater; and into them I will gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods; and I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thy rest: eat, drink, make good cheer. But God said to him: Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee: and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God."

Parable of the Foolish Rich Man.

Wishing to lead His disciples still further along the path of perfection, our Lord went on to tell them to keep their loins girt, to have their lamps burning in their hands, and ever to be prepared to obey the commands of their Divine Master: "Be like to men who wait for their lord when he shall come from a wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching And if He shall come in the second watch, or

The necessity of watchfulness.

in the third watch,* and find them so, blessed are those servants. But this know ye, that if the master of a family did know at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Be you also ready; for at what hour you know not the Son of Man will come." "Lord," asked St. Peter, "dost Thou speak this parable to us or to all?" In answering, our Saviour gave him to understand that He was indeed speaking to all, but that those whom He had appointed pastors over His flock would have to render a stricter account owing to the exalted position in which they had been placed. They were, He said, "the faithful and wise stewards whom the Lord setteth over His family, to give them their measure of wheat in due season"; and blessed would they be if, when the Lord came, He should find them so doing. Verily He would set them over all His goods. But if they should abuse their authority, terrible indeed would be their doom; for "unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom much is committed, of him will more be demanded."

Massacre of Galileans.

About this time our Lord was informed of the massacre by Pilate, in the Temple, of some Galileans, "whose blood he had mingled with the sacrifices." These are supposed to have been some of those seditious followers of Judas, the Galilean or Gaulonite, who denied that God's people were to pay tribute to foreigners; and it is thought that a number of them, who had come to offer up sacrifices in the Temple, and were spreading this doctrine in Jerusalem, were slain by Pilate's orders while they were in the act of offering sacrifice; so that their blood was in very truth mingled with that of the victims (Acts v. 87). As the disciples were desirous of knowing whether these men were sinners

* By the first watch we are to understand childhood, or the beginning of our existence; by the second, manhood; and by the third, old age.

above all the men of Galilee, because they had suffered these things, our Saviour gave them to understand that they were not the most culpable among the inhabitants of that country. Nor, He added, were those eighteen who were lately crushed to death by the fall of a tower at Siloë the most guilty in God's sight of all the citizens of Jerusalem. "But," He added, "unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish." Then, the better to convince their minds of the necessity of repentance, He spoke this parable:

Parable of the Barren Fig-tree.

"A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. He therefore said to the dresser of the vineyard: Behold, for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore; why cumbreth it the ground? But the man besought his master to allow it to remain yet another year, and he would tend it, and dig about it, and if at the end of that time it remained fruitless, then might it be cut down." "In the person of this vintager," writes the Abbé Fouard,* "Jesus represented Himself pleading for Judaea, His cherished vineyard, most of all for Jerusalem, which rose up in their midst like a barren fig-tree. For three years had the Heavenly Father sought fruit from off its branches, but without avail; at length, with His death so near at hand, all that Jesus could do was to obtain from God one last year of penitence, that year which was to extend from the Passion up to the destruction of Jerusalem. Oh, that Israel would but hearken to this final, mighty appeal! Would indeed that she might bring forth the flower and the fruit so long and patiently expected!"

On a certain occasion, when Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on a Sabbath-day, He beheld a woman who for eighteen years had been afflicted with a painful

* "The Christ," vol. ii., p. 97.

infirmity, and was so bent that she could not look up. He called her to Him, and laid His hands upon her, saying: "Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity." In a moment the right use of her limbs was restored, and she rose up glorifying God. When the ruler of the synagogue saw this, speaking apparently through solicitude for the keeping of the Sabbath, but in reality from a feeling of envy, he cried out: "There are six days wherein you ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day." "Ye hypocrites," answered our Lord, "doth not every one of you on the Sabbath-day loose his ox and his ass from the manger, and lead them to the water? Ought not then this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day?" Upon this, His adversaries were ashamed; but the people rejoiced for all the things that were gloriously done by Him.

Cure of an infirm woman.

CHAPTER XXXII

CHRIST GOES THROUGH PERAEA TOWARDS JERUSALEM—HIS MESSAGE TO HEROD—THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

Luke XIII., John X.

"I have said: You are gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High" (Ps. lxxxi. 6).

Jesus now passed through Peraea, teaching in the towns and villages, and in this way proceeded towards Jerusalem. On one occasion, when asked whether those who were saved were few or many, He replied: "Strive to enter in by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter and shall

The narrow gate.

not be able"—a warning similar to that already given by Him on a former occasion: "How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way which leadeth to life; and few there are that find it" (Matt. vii. 14). "When the Master of the house shall be gone in," continued our Saviour, "and shall shut the door, you shall begin to stand without and knock, asking to be admitted; but He shall bid you depart thence, saying that He knows you not, you that work iniquity. . . . Then shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold, they are last that shall be first, and they are first that shall be last." Thus many who in this world are condemned and despised shall in the next receive glory; while, on the other hand, countless numbers of those who live in honour among their fellow-men shall pass to eternal torments.

Message to Herod Antipas.

The Pharisees, in their desire to allure Jesus away from Peraea and to get Him within their own reach, came to Him, and told Him, falsely, that Herod was laying snares for Him, and accordingly pressed Him to fly the country. "Depart," they said, and get Thee hence; for Herod hath a mind to kill Thee." Their words produced but little effect. "Go, and tell that fox," He replied: "Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures, to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am consummated. Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following;* because it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Not that all the prophets suffered in Jerusalem, though many did; but that He, the great Prophet, their Messias, should there be

* That is, He must labour for a little while longer.

put to death. Then it was that our Saviour, as He contemplated the ingratitude of the Holy City, gave utterance to that pathetic lamentation: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, as the bird doth her brood under her wings, and thou wouldst not? Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. And I say to you, that you shall not see Me till the time come, when you shall say: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."*

Feast of Dedication.

Once more, when the city was given over to the joyous celebrations which marked the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple,† Jesus entered Jerusalem; and, as He was walking in the portico of the Temple named after Solomon, the Jews pressed round about Him, and called on Him to tell them plainly whether He was the Christ. Now, St. John the Baptist had told them several times who Jesus was. He Himself had not only owned it in plain terms to the Samaritan woman, but had on several occasions publicly declared that He came from heaven, that He was sent into the world that all men might be saved by believing in Him, that He was the Son of God, and One with the Father. But these men would have Him declare it again that they might accuse Him. Jesus therefore answered them: "I speak to you, and you believe not; the works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me; but you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give them life everlasting, and they shall not perish for ever; and no man shall pluck them out

* Hereafter you shall own Me for your Messias and the world's Redeemer, at least at the day of judgment. It may also be understood of the Jews who are to be converted to the faith of Jesus Christ towards the end of the world.

† See Vol. I., p. 562.

of My hand." He then goes on to show them the greatness of the Divine nature which He received from the Father by eternal generation, and that the power of the Father and the Son is equal, that it is one and the same: "That which My Father hath given Me is greater than all; and no man can snatch them out of the hand of My Father. *I and the Father are one.*" This declaration so exasperated the Jews that they seemed to lose all presence of mind; and, instead of making His words the ground of an accusation, they snatched up stones, and would have stoned Him to death forthwith as a blasphemer. But their rage for the moment was checked by the calm inquiry of Jesus: "Many good works I have shown you from My Father; for which of those do you stone Me?" "It is not for a good work," they exclaimed, "that we would stone Thee, but for blasphemy; and because, being a man, Thou makest Thyself God." But He vindicated His words from the Scriptures, and from the miracles which the Father had wrought by Him; and when they sought to lay hands upon Him, He escaped out of their power, and, quitting Jerusalem, returned to the other side of the Jordan, into the land of Peraea.

Here, on the banks of the Jordan, where John had baptised, the people flocked about Him again. "John, indeed," they said, "did no sign. But all things whatsoever John said of this man were true." And many believed in Him.

CHAPTER XXXIII

JESUS BY THE JORDAN—HE HEALS THE DROPSICAL MAN—PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER

Luke XIV.

"And it shall come to pass that every one that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel ii. 32).

"Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (Ps. ii. 8).

"And I will say to that which is not My people: Thou art My people; and they shall say: Thou art My God" (Osee ii. 24).

Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath.

THE Pharisees were ever watching over our Saviour's actions, and continued their captious questions, hoping thus to weaken His influence with the people, and to find an opportunity of accusing Him and of putting Him to death. With the same wicked intent a certain chief of the Pharisees invited Him to dine with him on the Sabbath-day. From the very outset the eyes of His enemies were directed towards Him, for it had been noted that in the crowd of onlookers was a man suffering from the dropsy, and that our Saviour's attention had already been drawn to him. Jesus did not ask the poor man whether he wished to be cured, neither did the latter dare to ask the favour of Him for fear of the Pharisees. Then, regardless of their wicked designs, our Lord asked: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?" They, however, held their peace. But He, taking the sick man, healed him and sent him away.

Knowing the thoughts of those who reclined with Him at table, and that they would blame Him as a Sabbath-breaker, Jesus proceeded to ask: "Which of you shall

have an ass or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath-day?"

Jesus confounds the Pharisees.

But they made no response to His question. Yet, by this example, does He not convict His adversaries as guilty of inconsistency, and of thinking only of their own interests? They would rescue beasts on the Sabbath-day for their own advantage, and would condemn Him for healing men out of charity towards His neighbour.

The lowest seats at the banquet.

Then to those that had been invited along with Himself He addressed a lesson, after noting how they chose the first seats at the table: "When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the first place, lest perhaps one more honourable than thou be invited; and he that invited thee and him come and say: Give this man place; and then thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art invited, go sit down in the lowest place, that, when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee: Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee. Because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Then, turning to the Pharisee who had invited Him, He pointed out that we ought to have motives in the disposal of our charity, and taught that there is more merit in giving to the indigent, from whom we can expect no return, than in the exercise of liberality towards those who will repay us: "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; and thou shalt be blest, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just."

He also addressed to them the Parable of the Great Supper to which many were invited. When the supper-time came, the master of the house sent his servant to bid the

guests come in, for now the supper was ready. But those that were invited began to excuse themselves, one alleging that he had just bought a farm and must needs go and see it; another that he had bought five yoke of oxen and must go and try them; while a third prayed to be excused on the plea that he had married a wife. Upon this, the master of the house was angry, and bade his servant go out quickly into the streets and by-lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and the feeble, and the blind and the lame. This the servant did, and yet there was room; whereupon his master commanded him to go and search the highways and the hedges, and press those whom he should find there to accept of his hospitality: "But I say to you, that none of those who were invited shall taste of my supper."

Parable of the Great Supper.

By this parable we are to understand how Christ, our great Mediator, when the fulness of time was come, sent His servants, *i.e.*, His Apostles, to call the people of Israel who had been invited to partake of the good things of His kingdom on so many occasions; but not only did the princes of the house of Israel refuse the invitation, but they even murdered the Lord who had invited them; whereas the outcasts of Israel, by eagerly listening to His voice, merited to take their place at the heavenly banquet. Yet the Master, seeing that there were still many empty places, ordered His servants to go outside the town and bring any strangers whom they should find into His house. In these words of our Divine Lord we see clearly foreshadowed the Call of the Gentiles.

Meaning of the parable.

When our Lord left the Pharisee's table, He was followed by a great throng of people, whom He addressed in words which seem to have been a continuation of the discourse that He had just delivered in the house. He pointed out the dispositions

Conditions of discipleship.

necessary in him who would become His disciple, and how such a one must be willing to renounce everything, how near and dear soever it might be, that would keep him from following Him. The true disciple must not be discouraged if he meet with many hardships and labours in the journey to his heavenly country. He must set the love of God above all things else. He must be ready to forego even the tenderest ties of affection should they become an obstacle to salvation: "If any man come to Me, and hate not [*i.e.*, be not ready to forsake if need be] his father and mother, and wife and children, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever doth not carry his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple."

The duty of the true disciple.

Then, by means of similitudes, He represents the office and duty of one who would be His true follower, and warns him that, before entering His service, he must take time carefully to consider the cost: "For which of you having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it? Or what king about to go to war against another king doth not first sit down, and think whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that with twenty thousand cometh against him?" The discomfiture of both, He goes on to show, would be equally certain; and so would it be, too, with one who wished to be His disciple if he were not willing to renounce all that he possessed. If, through want of previous and serious consideration, such a one were afterwards constrained to give up his enterprise, his enemies would deride him, and say: "This man began to build, and was not able to finish." The disciple, moreover, must season, purify, and keep all his actions free from corruption by the spiritual salt of mortification and prayer, lest, after he has once been illumined

with the light of faith, he be so unfortunate as to fall into the sink of his former evil habits. What remedy is there remaining for such? "If the salt shall lose its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is fit only to be cast out." Wishing, in conclusion, to impress the importance of these instructions on the minds of His hearers, He uttered those words of solemn import: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THREE PARABLES FOR THE HOPE OF THE PENITENT: THE LOST SHEEP—THE LOST GROAT —THE PRODIGAL SON

Luke XV.

"We are His people and the sheep of His pasture" (Ps. xcix. 3). "The Lord is compassionate and merciful; long suffering and plenteous in mercy. As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him" (Ps. ciii. 8, 13).

On one occasion, when many publicans and sinners had drawn near to our Lord to hear His word, the Pharisees murmured, and found fault with Him for associating with such men. But, to show them how acceptable to God is the repentance of a sinner, and the joy it gives to the blessed in heaven, He proffered them as an answer three parables expressive of the tender mercies of His Father to all who truly turned to Him.

Parable of the Lost Sheep.

"What man among you," He began, "that hath a hundred sheep, doth not, when he has lost one, leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which is lost till he find it? And when he hath found it, doth he not lay it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and coming home call together his

friends and neighbours to rejoice with him? I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance."

Parable of the Lost Groat.

"Or what woman," He said, "having ten groats, if she lose one, doth she not light a candle, and sweep the house and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, doth she not call together her neighbours to rejoice with her? So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance."

In this parable of the groat, or *drachma*,* "we find mankind compared to a drachma, which was lost, to show us," remarks St. Chrysostom, "that we have been made to the royal likeness and image even of the omnipotent God; for the drachma is a piece of money bearing the image of the king."

Parable of the Prodigal Son.

Yet the most touching comparison made by our Lord on the subject of the penitent sinner is given in the Parable of the Prodigal Son:—A certain man had two sons, the younger of whom, eager to throw off all parental restraint, asked his father to divide his substance, and give him the portion that would naturally fall to his lot. His request was granted, and he at once left his father's house, and went abroad into a far country. Here, by living riotously, he soon squandered his fortune, and found himself in want of the very necessaries of life. To make his condition more lamentable, there came a great famine in the land, and he would have died of starvation had he not hired himself to one of the inhabitants of that country, who assigned him the task of tending his swine. To show the extreme misery of his condition, he could procure no food but what was given to the swine; and he was fain to share the

* The value of the drachma was about 8d.

husks that were cast to them. The wretchedness of his lot caused him to reflect, and in the depth of his misery he said to himself: "How many hired servants in my father's house abound in bread, and I here perish of hunger? I will arise, and will go to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee: I am not worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

The prodigal's return.

Overwhelmed with grief and sorrow, he rose up, and set out for his father's house. While he was yet a long way off, his father espied him, and being moved with compassion, ran forward to meet him, and fell upon his neck and kissed him. So touched was the son by such a welcome, and so filled with remorse for his transgressions, that he cried out in an agony of shame: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee: I am not worthy to be called thy son." But the father called to his servants: "Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him: put a ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us make merry, because this, my son, was dead and is come to life again: he was lost and is found." And they made merry.

Jealousy of the elder son.

At this time the elder son was in the field; and when, on coming home, he heard the music and the dancing, he inquired of one of the servants what this might mean. On learning what had come to pass, he was angry, and refused to enter the house. The good father, hearing that he remained without, left the festivities that he might induce him to come and share in the general joy. But, allowing his jealousy to get the mastery over him, the young man exclaimed reproachfully: "Behold, for so many years I have served thee, nor have I at any time transgressed thy commandments, and yet thou hast never given me so much

as a kid to make merry with my friends; but no sooner does this thy son, who has squandered his substance in debauchery, make his appearance, than thou killest for him the fatted calf." "Son," replied the father, "thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. But it was fitting that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is come to life again: he was lost and is found."

In this parable we have fully displayed to us the wretchedness that overtakes an abandoned sinner, and the satisfaction that accompanies true and sincere repentance. Many of the Fathers, moreover, see in the elder son the Jewish people, who for a long time had been the chosen servants of God; and in the younger the Gentiles, who for so many years had run blindly on in their idolatry and vices. The elder son boasts of having always served his father faithfully, and of never disobeying him. This is the language of that presumptuous people who believe themselves alone holy, and, despising the Gentiles with sovereign contempt, cannot bear to see the gates of salvation laid open also to them.

We must not be tempted to believe that Almighty God sets a higher value upon penitence than upon innocence. Our Lord is expressing Himself after a human manner, and only desires to teach us that a very special joy is felt over the return of the sinner; but He reserves a more affectionate familiarity for the righteous who are His old and faithful friends: "My son, thou art always with Me, and all I have is thine."

CHAPTER XXXV

PARABLES ON THE USE OF WEALTH: THE UNJUST STEWARD—THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS—UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS

Luke XVI., XVII.

"Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person; for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from thee" (Tob. iv. 7).

In the three foregoing parables, addressed to the murmuring Scribes and Pharisees, our Saviour shows with what earnestness He seeks the conversion and the salvation of a sinner. In the next two parables He teaches His disciples to accompany their penitential works with deeds of mercy to the poor, and shows how riches may be so used as to secure our salvation.

Parable of the Unjust Steward.

"There was a certain rich man," said our Saviour to His disciples, "who had a steward, and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him to him, and said: 'How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer.' Filled with consternation at these words, the steward said within himself: 'What shall I do? To dig I am not able; to beg I am ashamed. I know what I will do, that when I shall be removed from the stewardship they may receive me into their houses.' He immediately called together every one of his lord's debtors, and asked the first one how much he owed his lord. On being told a hundred barrels of oil, he bade him take his bill and write down fifty. Another, who owed a hundred quarters of wheat, he commanded to write down eighty. And the lord commended the unjust steward forasmuch as he had done wisely; for the children of this world are

wiser in their generation than the children of light. And I say to you: 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon* of iniquity, that, when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.'"

Meaning of the parable.

By this we are to understand that, if the lord of this unjust steward could commend him for his worldly prudence, though it covered an overt act of injustice, how much more will the Almighty be pleased with those who are prudent in spiritual matters, and who, obedient to His command, seek to redeem their sins by alms-deeds, whereby, says holy Tobias, we store up for ourselves a good reward for the day of necessity: "For alms deliver from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness" (Tob. iv. 11). Worldlings are more prudent and circumspect as to what regards their temporal concerns than they who profess themselves servants of God are about the concerns of eternity. The unjust steward is not commended for his cheating and injustice, but for his contrivances in his own behalf. In recommending us to make to ourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, our Lord does not authorise us to wrong our neighbours to give to the poor, since evil is never to be done that good may come of it, but He exhorts us to make the poor our friends before God by relieving them with the riches that justly belong to us, but which are called the *mammon of iniquity*, because only the iniquitous man places his affections in them. We should so give, that the poor servants of God, whom we have relieved by our alms, may hereafter, by their intercession, bring our souls to heaven, to the *everlasting dwellings* spoken of by our Saviour.

Turning again to contempt for riches, Jesus went on to show that it was incumbent on the rich to succour

* *Mammon*, a Syrian god who presided over riches, is mentioned here as the personification of worldliness and wealth.

a neighbour in want. To illustrate this duty He related to them the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

"There was a certain rich man," He said, "who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and who feasted sumptuously every day. At his gate lay a poor beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, begging for the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table: yet no one had the charity to give them to him; but the dogs came and licked his sores. Death at length put an end to the poor man's sufferings, and he was borne by angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried in hell. From that place of torments he beheld Abraham afar off, and Lazarus happy and at rest in his bosom; and he cried aloud: 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.' Abraham said to him: 'Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos; so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, nor from thence come hither.' 'Then at least,' said he, 'I beseech thee that thou wouldst send Lazarus to my five brethren in my father's house, that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torments.' 'They have Moses and the Prophets,' replied Abraham, 'let them hear them.' But he said: 'No, father Abraham, but if one go to them from the dead, they will do penance.' 'If they hear not Moses and the Prophets,' Abraham answered, 'neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead.'"

This parable teaches the rich that they will draw upon themselves a sentence of condemnation if, seeing their neighbour in want, they neglect to succour him: "He that hath the substance of this world," says St. John,

"and shall see his brother in need, and shut up his bowels against him, how doth the charity of God abound in him?" (1 Epis. iii. 17). We are not to understand that all poverty is holy and the possession of riches criminal; but, as luxury is the disgrace of riches, so holiness of life is the ornament of poverty. In this parable, which St. Ambrose takes to be a real fact, the name of the poor mendicant is given; but our Lord suppresses the name of the rich man to signify that his name is blotted out of the book of life. Besides, the rich man tells Abraham that he has five brethren, who were probably still living; wherefore, to save their honour, our Lord named not their reprobated brother.

Lessons from the parable.

Hereupon our Lord repeated the lessons He had once given in Galilee, and again addressed His disciples on the evil of scandal-giving, and on the necessity of our forgiving injuries. Hearing Him inculcate maxims that were so hard to flesh and blood, they humbly begged that their faith might be increased; for they had heard Him say that everything was possible to him that believed. "If you had faith like a grain of mustard-seed," He replied, "you might say to this mulberry-tree: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea: and it would obey you." The mustard-seed is brought in with an allusion to its hot and active qualities. If they possessed faith, perfect faith, which in its properties and its fruits resembles the mustard-seed in the parable, they could perform the greatest miracles.

On scandal, forgiveness, and faith.

"Which of you," He said, "having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say to him when he is come from the field: Immediately go, sit down to meat: and will not rather say to him: Make ready my supper, and gird thyself, and serve me whilst I eat and drink, and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant for doing the

Unprofitable servants.

things which he commanded him? I think not." Then, to instil into them a love of humility, He added: "When you shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which we ought."

Humility.

"One and all were reminded that the Master Husbandman has given to each a task at the tillage, some in this place, some farther afield, and on the day when the plough-handle slips from their weary grasp, and the sickle falls from their weary fingers, they must not pretend to any credit beyond 'having done what they ought,' nor claim the right to any glory other than a share in the boundless mercies of the Lord of the Harvest."* Our service, indeed, is of *no profit* to our Master, and He justly claims it as our bounden duty. But though we are *unprofitable to Him*, our serving Him is *not unprofitable to us*; for He is pleased to give, by His grace, a value to our good works, which, in consequence of His promise, will receive an eternal reward. With regard to God, then, we are always useless servants, since He stands in no need of our services, but He requires them of us in order that He may have a title to reward us.

CHAPTER XXXVI

LAZARUS IS RAISED TO LIFE

John XI.

"Shall man that is dead, thinkest thou, live again? . . . Thou shalt call me, and I will answer Thee: to the work of Thy hands Thou shalt stretch out Thy right hand" (Job xiv. 14, 15).

WHILE Jesus was still traversing the land of Peraea, surrounded by His disciples and by many others who had come to hear His preaching, a messenger arrived from

* Abbé Fouard, "The Christ," vol. ii., p. 120.

Martha and Mary at Bethany announcing the illness of their brother Lazarus: "Behold, Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus sent the messenger back with the words: "The sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it"; and He still remained two days longer in Peraea before crossing over the Jordan into Judaea. When at length He was prepared to set out, His disciples would have dissuaded Him, saying: "Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again?" But when He announced that His reason for going was to awaken Lazarus out of his sleep, they, believing that He spoke of natural sleep, could not understand why He should wish to disturb slumbers which they judged must be beneficial to the sufferer. Then did He say to them plainly: "Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. But let us go to him." His words served but to increase the fears of His disciples; whereupon Thomas, surnamed Didymus, wishing to fire their drooping courage, exclaimed: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." When Jesus, with His disciples, arrived at Bethany, He found that Lazarus had been in the grave four days.

Illness and death of Lazarus.

No sooner did Martha hear that Jesus was approaching than, leaving Mary in the house, she hastened to meet Him. Drawing near to Him, she said: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but now also I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, He will give it to Thee." Jesus said to her: "Thy brother shall rise again." "I know," rejoined Martha, "that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her: "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live; and every one that liveth and believeth in Me shall not die for ever. Believest

Martha goes out to meet our Lord.

thou this?" "Yea, Lord," she answered, "I have believed that Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, who art come into this world." She then hurried back to inform Mary of our Lord's arrival. "The Master is come," she whispered in her ear, "and calleth for thee." Mary rose up at once and hastened to Jesus, who was still in the place where Martha had left Him.

Jesus goes to the tomb of Lazarus.

Now, when the Jews, who had come together to comfort the two sisters, saw Mary leave the house, they rose up and followed her, saying: "She goeth to the grave to weep there." Mary cast herself at the feet of Jesus, and giving vent to a flood of bitter tears, murmured: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also who were with her, He groaned in spirit, and was much troubled. "Where have they laid him?" He asked. "Lord, come and see," they said. Jesus also wept as He followed them to the tomb. Seeing Him weep thus, the Jews whispered to one another: "Behold how He loved him!" "But," said some, "could not He that opened the eyes of the man born blind have caused that this man should not die?"

The raising of Lazarus.

Arrived at the sepulchre, which was in a cave sealed with a great stone, He bade them remove the stone. But Martha, who thought that He merely wished to see the corpse, reminded Him that, as her brother had been dead four days, the body must have already begun to decompose. Jesus said to her: "Did I not say to thee that, if thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?" The stone was accordingly removed, and the body exposed to view. Then Jesus, raising His eyes towards heaven, began: "Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard Me; and I know that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may

believe that Thou hast sent Me." He then cried out with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth!" and immediately he that had been dead came forth with his hands, feet, and face still wrapped about with the grave-clothes. "Loose him," said Jesus, "and let him go." Many of the Jews who were present, when they saw this stupendous miracle, believed in Jesus, while others went and related what had occurred to the Pharisees.

Prophecy of Caiphas.

The chief priests and the Pharisees at once summoned a council, and anxiously deliberated what was to be done. "If we let Him alone so," they said, "all men will believe in Him; and the Romans will come and take our place and nation."* Caiphas, who was High Priest that year, though unworthy of the dignity, unwittingly uttered a prophecy which was so soon to be fulfilled: "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." This, says the Sacred Text, he spoke, not of himself, but, being High Priest, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation. From that day, therefore, they planned how they might put him to death. From this time Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews, but with a chosen band of followers withdrew to Ephrem, a small town situated in the wilderness a little to the north-west of Jericho, and there He abode till the time when He had resolved to deliver Himself up into the hands of His enemies.

* If we own Him for our great Messias and King.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE LAST JOURNEY OF JESUS TO JERUSALEM—THE TEN LEPERS—COMING OF THE SON OF MAN—THE UNJUST JUDGE—THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

Luke XVII., XVIII.

"Let nothing hinder thee from praying always" (Ecclus. xviii. 22).

"For in Thee, O Lord, have I hoped: Thou wilt hear me, O Lord my God" (Ps. xxxvii. 16).

Jesus leaves Ephrem.

A LITTLE while before the great Feast of the Pasch our Lord seems to have gone northward as far as the borders of Samaria and Galilee, and then, turning eastward, to have passed over the Jordan, and to have advanced towards Jerusalem, keeping along the east bank of the river, without penetrating into the interior of Peraea.

Cleansing of the ten lepers.

It was while He was on the frontiers of Samaria and Galilee, and as He was entering a little town there, that He was accosted by ten lepers, who stood at a distance crying out: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" In answer to their petition for a cure, He bade them go and show themselves to the priests; and it came to pass that, as they went on their way, they were made clean. One of them, a poor Samaritan, when he saw that he had been cured, went back, and with a loud voice glorified God for the favour he had received; and, drawing near to our Lord, fell down at His feet and humbly poured out his grateful thanks. "Were not ten made clean," asked our Saviour, "and where are the nine? There is no one found to return and give glory to God but this stranger." Then, turning to the Samaritan, He con-

tinued: "Arise, go thy way. thy faith hath made thee whole."

Were not the others made whole? may reasonably be asked. They were indeed made clean of the leprosy of the body, but probably they were not justified in their souls like the Samaritan to whom it was said: "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Coming of the kingdom of God.

The cure of the lepers did not fail to attract the attention of the Galilean Pharisees. They were looking for a Messias powerful according to this world, a conqueror, a monarch, a revenger of the injuries of Israel: one who would restore them to liberty, and bless them with temporal goods and prosperity. But in Jesus they saw nothing which corresponded to these magnificent hopes; and therefore they asked Him, chiefly by way of insult and reproach, when this kingdom of God would come which He so often talked of and announced to His disciples. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," said our Lord —*i.e.*, the kingdom foretold by prophecy was not to be a great temporal power, as they imagined; the Messias would not be seen at the head of armies spreading terror and desolation. Everything in connection with His kingdom would be the reverse of this: "Lo, the kingdom of God is within you": it is with you: your Messias is already come. He standeth in the midst of you as John the Baptist told you (John i. 26).

Jesus' warning to His disciples.

Then, to excite His disciples to profit more by His presence while they enjoyed it, He turned to them and said: "The days will come when you shall desire to see one day of the Son of Man, and you shall not see it." When He had taken from them His corporeal presence, and they had been exposed to persecution and affliction, then, truly, would they wish to see one day of the Son of Man, and should not

be able to obtain it. They would wish ardently to see Him and to consult Him, but should not have that happiness.

Jesus speaks of His second coming.

He next alludes to the glory in which He will appear when, surrounded by His angels, He will come to judge the world. To show how sudden will be this His last coming, He compares it to the swiftness of lightning: "As the lightning that lighteneth from under heaven shineth unto the parts that are under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in His day." This is the time when He is to manifest His glory, and not on His entry into Jerusalem, as the disciples imagined; for He informs them that He will then have to suffer a cruel death: "He must first suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation." He compares His second coming to the coming of the Deluge in the days of Noe. His coming will be when men least expect it, when they are solely occupied in the affairs of this world.

Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge.

Jesus would have His disciples pray daily and frequently, and walk always in the presence of God by a spirit of prayer: "Always pray and faint not." To instil into them the necessity and the power of perseverance in prayer, He spoke to them this parable: "There was a judge in a certain city who feared not God, nor regarded man; and there was a widow in that city who came to him asking him to do justice between her and her adversary. For a while he would not listen to her petition; but being importuned again and again, he said to himself: 'Although I fear not God, nor regard man, yet, because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her, lest continually coming she weary me out.' And will not God avenge His elect who call to Him day and night; and will He not have patience in their regard? I say to you that He will quickly avenge them." Yet must faith necessarily accompany our prayers; for he

who prays for what he does not believe he will obtain will pray in vain. Our faith, moreover, begets prayer, and prayer in its turn begets more faith.

Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.

Against such as trust in themselves as just, and who, pronouncing their own panegyric, despise others whose heart is unknown to them, He directed this parable:—Two men went into the Temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee stood, and gave thanks to God that he was not as the rest of men; that he was not an extortioner, nor guilty of injustice; neither was he an adulterer, nor such as was the publican whom he scornfully pointed to. He fasted twice in the week, he said, and gave tithes of all that he possessed. But the poor publican, who stood afar off, felt unworthy in his humility to raise his eyes to heaven, and struck his breast, saying: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." "This man," said our Lord, "went down to his house justified rather than the other; because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

We see here, remarks St. Gregory, how the Pharisee, by pride, lays open to the enemy his heart, which he had in vain shut against him by fasting and prayer; and how vain must be the attempt to defend a city if we leave the enemy a single passage by which he may enter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

INDISSOLUBILITY OF MARRIAGE—JESUS BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN—THE DANGER OF RICHES—PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD

Matt. XIX., XX.; Mark X.; Luke XVIII.

"A man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be two in one flesh" (Gen. ii. 24).

Divorce.

Again the Pharisees, ever anxious to ensnare Jesus in His words, came to Him and asked: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause?" "Because of the hardness of your hearts," He answered, "Moses permitted you to write a bill of divorce, and put her away; but from the beginning it was not so. From the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female (*i.e.*, one man and one woman, that they might be exclusively and invariably attached to each other); for which cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife. Therefore, they are not two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Moreover, to His disciples apart, He added: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for adultery, and marrieth another, committeth adultery." Nor does even such a separation sever the marriage bond; for immediately He goes on to add: "He that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery."

Holy virginity.

His disciples said to Him: "If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry." "All men," He said, "comprehend not this saying, but they to whom it is given." He then takes occasion to praise holy virginity, which He represents as a great and good gift of heaven. Hence it appears that,

besides commandments, there are what are called evangelical counsels, to the observance of which it is both lawful and meritorious for a Christian to devote himself, especially for the purpose of employing himself with greater liberty and less encumbrance in God's service. All indeed are not called to observe all or any of the evangelical counsels; but let those aspire to the practice of them who feel themselves called by heaven, and God will help them; for to be able to live singly and chastely is given to every one that asketh and prayeth for the grace.

Little children brought to Jesus.

While Jesus was yet speaking, His attention was drawn to certain women who had brought their little ones with them. Seeing that by His touch Jesus had restored health to the sick, these mothers, believing that the same touch must impart every good to their children, besought Him that He would lay His hands upon them. But the disciples, because of their importunity, rebuked them, and would have sent them away. Jesus, however, would not have them repelled, and said: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter it." And embracing them, and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them.

From the words of our Saviour we learn that heaven is the portion of such as resemble these little ones by the innocence and simplicity of their lives. Unless we are possessed of the innocence and purity of little children, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; nor shall we ever understand the truths of the Gospel; for as a child, remarks the Venerable Bede, does not contradict its teachers, nor oppose to them vain reasonings and empty words, but faithfully and readily receives their instructions, and with fear obeys them, so must we implicitly obey, and without opposition receive the Word of God.

The rich young man.

When Jesus had left the dwelling in which He had been giving these instructions, and was proceeding along the road, a young man, whom St. Luke styles a ruler, ran up to Him, and, kneeling before Him, asked: "Good Master, what shall I do to possess everlasting life?" Jesus said to him: "Why callest thou Me good? None is good but God alone.* But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." "Which commandments?" asked the young man. Jesus answered: "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; honour thy father and thy mother; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Those commandments," observed the young man, "I have kept from my youth. What is yet wanting to me?" Jesus said to him: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." When the young man heard these words, he went away sad, for he had great possessions.

The dangers of riches.

Jesus, seeing him become thus sorrowful, said to His disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." To signify how difficult it was, He continued, making use of a figure of speech in familiar use with the Hebrews: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Perceiving that His words filled His disciples with wonder, He added: "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God." Peter said to Him: "Behold we have left all things, and have followed Thee; what therefore shall we have?" To this Jesus made answer: "Amen, I say to you,

* By these words our Saviour insinuates that he should either believe Him to be God, or cease to address Him by the title of good.

that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration (*i.e.*, in the general resurrection), when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His majesty, you shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And I say to you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

Labourers sent into the vineyard.

From the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard which Jesus next went on to relate to His disciples, we learn that the conduct of God in the choice He makes of members for His spiritual kingdom the Church, and of His elect for the kingdom of heaven, is not unlike that of the father of a family who hires workmen to labour in His vineyard. "The kingdom of heaven," He said, "is like to a householder who went out early to hire labourers into his vineyard. He agreed to give them a penny a day, and sent them into the vineyard. Having gone out about the third hour,* he saw others standing idle in the market-place, and asked them also to go in, and he would give them what was just. He went out also at the sixth hour, and again at the ninth hour, and did in like manner. Going out yet again about the eleventh hour, he found others standing idle, and bade them, like the rest, go into his vineyard.

The last shall be first, and the first last.

"When evening was come, he commanded his steward to call the labourers and pay them their hire, beginning with the last even to the first. Those who had come last, and had worked only one hour, received every man a penny. But when those who had worked throughout the day came to receive

* Like the Romans, the Jews divided the day into four periods of three hours each. The first hour = 6 a.m.; the third hour = 9 a.m.; the sixth hour = noon; the ninth hour = 3 p.m.; the twelfth hour = 6 p.m.; consequently the eleventh hour would correspond to 5 p.m.

their wages, and found that they too only received a penny, they murmured and said: 'These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the heat.' But he answering said to one of them: 'Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine, and go Thy way; I will also give to this last even as to thee. Or is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil* because I am good?' So shall the last be first, and the first last; for many are called, but few are chosen."

From the foregoing parable we gather, according to the words of St. Chrysostom, that some are called to the service of God and to a life of virtue from their infancy, while others, by a powerful call from above, are converted late in life; hence that those first called have no occasion to glory in themselves, or to despise those who, even at the eleventh hour, enter upon the path of rectitude; and that all may learn that there is time sufficient, however short, left them to repair, by diligence and fervour, their past losses. Our Saviour does not count so much the number of years as the fervour and diligence we employ in His service.

CHAPTER XXXIX

JESUS AGAIN PREDICTS HIS PASSION—HEALING OF A BLIND MAN NEAR JERICHO—VISIT TO ZACHEUS

Matt. XX.; Mark X.; Luke XVIII., XIX.

"He was offered because it was His own will, and He opened not His mouth: He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearer" (Isa. liii. 7).

As the Feast of the Pasch was drawing near, Jesus proceeded southward towards Jerusalem along the eastern

* The evil eye is used figuratively to signify envy.

bank of the Jordan, preaching and teaching in the villages on the way. At length, crossing the river, He advanced in the direction of Jericho.

Third prediction of His Passion.

When His intention of going to Jerusalem became known to the Twelve, they were filled with alarm; but, taking them apart, He revealed to them the mystery of His Passion: "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and spit on Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him; and the third day He shall rise again."

Here, for the third time, Jesus foretells His Passion; yet, like the rest of the Jews, the Apostles were so fully possessed with the idea that the Messias would be immortal that they could not understand what He said to them. He, however, revealed these things that, on a future day, recollecting how their Lord and Master had foreseen and foretold to them the most material circumstances relating to His Passion, death, and resurrection, they might believe more firmly in Him, and be convinced that He suffered of His own free choice.

Request of the mother of James and John.

Upon His informing them that He should die and rise again, they doubtless conceived that He would then immediately reign in Jerusalem with great power and glory. It was this idea that made the mother of the sons of Zebedee petition Him that James and John should take precedence: "Say that these two may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left in Thy kingdom." But Jesus answered: "You know not what you ask. Can you drink of the chalice [*i.e.*, of suffering and death] that I shall drink, or be baptised with the baptism wherewith I am baptised?" On their answering that they could, He said to them "You shall indeed drink of the chalice that I shall drink:

and be baptised with the baptism wherewith I am baptised; but to sit on My right hand or left is not Mine to give you, but to them for whom it is prepared by My Father." The other ten were displeased with James and John; but Jesus reminded them that whoever wished to be the greatest must be the servant of all, and that greatness in the next life would be proportioned to our humility in this: "Even as the Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life for the redemption of many."

A blind man cured.

As He drew near to Jericho, followed by a great multitude, there sat by the roadside a blind beggar. When, in reply to his inquiry as to the cause of the unusual noise, the poor man was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he cried aloud: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Upon this he was rebuked by the multitude, and ordered to hold his peace. He, however, not only refused to remain silent, but called out the louder: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Touched with compassion, Jesus stopped; and when, at His command, the blind man had been brought to Him, He asked: "What wilt thou that I do to thee?" "Lord, that I see," he answered. Jesus said to him: "Receive thy sight: thy faith hath made thee whole." Immediately he saw, and followed Jesus; and all the multitude joined with him in praising and glorifying God. Jesus then entered Jericho.

Jesus in Jericho.

In the city was a certain rich man named Zacheus, a farmer of the customs, who, not merely from curiosity, but hearkening doubtless to the interior voice of the Almighty calling him to repentance, and being resolved to make reparation for his many acts of injustice, made no delay in carrying out his desire to see Jesus. Being a man of short stature, he was not ashamed, in spite of the dignity of his office, to climb

into a sycamore-tree that overlooked the way along which Jesus must pass. When Jesus came near the place, He raised His eyes, and, seeing Zacheus, bade him come down; "for to-day," He said, "I must abide in thy house." Filled with surprise and delighted at the command, Zacheus descended in all haste, and joyfully welcomed our Saviour to his house.

Conversion of Zacheus.

A murmur of displeasure passed through the people when they saw Jesus go to be the guest of one who was a sinner. But our Lord heeded it not, for He knew that the conversion of Zacheus was whole-hearted and sincere. Standing humbly before our Saviour, he offered, of his own accord, and as a sign of his sincere repentance, to make restitution for all his acts of injustice. "Behold, Lord," he said, "the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold." Jesus said to him: "This day is salvation come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Notwithstanding all that Jesus had said to His disciples about His kingdom, His death and resurrection, they still believed that a temporal kingdom was soon to be proclaimed, and that Jesus, in this journey, would cause Himself to be acknowledged King by the whole nation of the Jews. Finding that this thought was still uppermost in their minds, and wishing to disabuse them of it, while still in the house He related the following parable, in which He compared Himself to a nobleman going into a distant land:

Parable of the Pounds.

A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And calling together his ten servants, he gave each a pound with which to trade till he returned. But the inhabitants of the country hated him, and sent an embassy after him, saying: "We will not have this man

over us." And it came to pass that, after he had received his kingdom, he returned, and commanded his servants to be called that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. The first said: "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." "Well done, thou good servant," he said, "because thou hast been faithful in a little, thou shalt have power over ten cities." The second, whose pound had gained five pounds, he likewise placed over five cities. Another came saying: "Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have laid up in a napkin; for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up what thou didst not lay down, and thou reapest what thou didst not sow." His lord said to him: "Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest all this; then why didst thou not give my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required it with usury?" Then, turning to those who stood by, he commanded them to take away the pound from him, and to give it to him that had the ten; "for," said he, "to every one that hath [*i.e.*, who has made good use of what was committed to his trust] he shall abound; and from him that hath not [*i.e.*, who fails to make good use of the graces received], even that which he hath shall be taken from him. But as for those my enemies, who would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and kill them before me."*

In the parable the nobleman is the Son of God, who came among the Jews to take possession of the kingdom which was His due. But, being rejected by them, and

* This parable is an exact prophetic history of what happened to Archelaus Antipas, son of Herod the Great, about thirty-six years afterwards. Judaea being then tributary to Rome, he was obliged to go there to receive his kingdom from the hands of the Emperor. The Jews, who hated him for his cruelty, sent an embassy to the Emperor to accuse him of many crimes, and disappoint him in his hopes of gaining his crown. But the Emperor confirmed it to him, and sent him back to reign in Judaea, where he revenged himself on those who opposed his pretensions.

even put to a disgraceful death on the cross, He will one day come again to demand from them a strict account, and to punish the guilty. The penalty was partly exacted at the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), and will be finally completed at the general judgment.

The blind Bartimaeus receives his sight.

After this, Jesus left Jericho by the road leading to Jerusalem, accompanied by His Apostles, and still attended by a great multitude. As He was leaving the city He was accosted by the blind Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus); and being touched with compassion He stopped and commanded the blind man to be brought to Him. Those who hurried to bring Bartimaeus said to him: "Be of better comfort: arise, He calleth thee." So filled with joy was the blind man that in a moment he sprang to his feet, cast off his garment, and hastened to the side of Jesus, who, in reward for his faith, restored his sight.

CHAPTER XL

THE ANOINTING IN BETHANY

Matt. XXVI.; Mark XIV.; John XI., XII.

"This month (Nisan) shall be to you the beginning of months. On the tenth day of this month let every man take a lamb by their families and houses" (Exod. xii. 2, 3).

Jesus expected at Jerusalem.

We read in the eleventh chapter of St. John that when the Pasch of the Jews was at hand, and many from the country had gone up to Jerusalem to purify themselves in preparation for the Feast, they sought for Jesus, and discoursed with one another as they stood in the Temple, saying: "What think you that He is not come to the Festival?" The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that, if any man knew where He was, he should give information that they might seize

Him. This was the last Pasch that our Saviour was to keep upon earth, and the one on which He was to suffer death for our salvation.

Jesus sups with Simon the Leper.

On Friday the eighth of Nisan (*March to April*), A.D. 30, about the time when the setting sun began to usher in the sixth day before the Pasch,* Jesus arrived at Bethany, the village in which He had raised Lazarus to life. There He spent the Sabbath. On the tenth of the month the Jews were accustomed to collect the lambs and other things in preparation for the ensuing great Feast, and to celebrate a feast with their friends. On this occasion Jesus partook of supper at the house of Simon the Leper. Lazarus also was an invited guest, and by showing himself alive, and speaking and eating with those sitting at table, he confounded the inexcusable incredulity of the Jews.

He is anointed by Mary.

While Martha served at table during the supper, Mary brought an alabaster-box of precious ointment, which she poured on the head of Jesus as He sat at table, and then anointed His feet, which she wiped with her hair. Thereupon Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, who was about to betray Him, asked why the ointment was not sold for three hundred pence, and the money given to the poor. Now, this he said, not that he cared for the poor, but, as St. John remarks, "because he was a thief, and, having the purse, carried what was put therein." Many of the disciples, too, who had no suspicion of the avaricious motive of Judas, also complained of what they regarded as needless waste. But Jesus said to them: "Let her alone: why do you molest her? She hath wrought a good work upon Me: for the poor you have always with you, but Me you have not always. She, in pouring this ointment upon My body, hath anointed Me for My burial. Amen I say to

* The Jewish day was from sunset to sunset.

you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memory of her."

Some see in this gentle reference to His approaching death a wish on the part of Jesus to arouse in the heart of Judas compunction for his wickedness, and still more for the evil resolution he had already begun to form of betraying his Divine Master.

Many flock to see Jesus.

The arrival of Jesus in Bethany was soon reported in Jerusalem, and crowds of Jews flocked from the city, not only to see Him, but Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead. Many who had gone out of curiosity to see Lazarus were converted; but when the chief priests found that Lazarus was the cause why many believed in Jesus, they resolved on the death of both.

PART VI

HOLY WEEK

OUR SAVIOUR'S MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM

"Tell the daughter of Sion: Behold, thy Saviour cometh: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him" (Isa. lxii. 11).

CHAPTER XLI

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM IN TRIUMPH—SECOND PURIFICATION OF THE TEMPLE

Matt. XXI.; Mark XI.; Luke XIX.; John XII.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold thy King will come to thee, the Just and Saviour: He is poor, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass" (Zach. ix. 9).

"My house shall be called the house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. lvi. 7).

"Is this House then, in which My name hath been called upon, in your eyes become a den of robbers?" (Jer. vii. 11).

Sunday, the 10th of Nisan.

On the first day of the week, the very day on which the lamb which was to be sacrificed at the Passover was brought into the city, Jesus set out for Jerusalem; and great numbers of those who had come up to the Feast came forth to meet Him. As He drew near to Bethphage, a village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, He directed two of His disciples to go into the village which lay before them, where they would find an ass tied, and a colt with her: "Loose them," He said, "and bring them to Me. And if any man shall say any-

thing to you, tell him that the Lord hath need of them, and forthwith he will let them go." All this was done that the word might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "Tell ye the daughter of Sion: Behold, thy King cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of her that is used to the yoke."

Hosanna to the Son of David.

All happened as Jesus had foretold; and the disciples, having spread their garments on the back of the colt, Jesus sat thereon, and in this way advanced up the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. A holy enthusiasm now seized upon the people. Many spread their garments in the road, while others cut down branches of palm-trees and strewed them before Him; and, as the procession began the descent of the Mount, and the people came in sight of Jerusalem, there burst from the lips both of those who went before and those who came after a mighty shout of joy. They praised God for the wonderful works they had seen, and proclaimed: "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

The Pharisees alarmed. Christ weeps over Jerusalem.

Some Pharisees, who had also come out with the rest, were vexed that so many followed Jesus, even after they had ordered that whoever owned Him should be turned out of their synagogues. Believing that all their plots against Him had failed, they were filled with anxiety, and said to one another: "Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold the whole world is gone after Him." They even remonstrated with Jesus Himself, and asked Him to rebuke His followers. But He said to them: "If these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." Then, fixing His gaze on the royal city of David spread out before Him in all its beauty and grandeur, He wept over it and exclaimed: "If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the

things that are to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation."*

Entry into Jerusalem.

Jesus entered Jerusalem by the golden gate which looks towards the east, and which was not far distant from the Temple, where the procession was to terminate. The whole city was in commotion by reason of the triumphal entry of Jesus, and the people cried out: "This is Jesus the Prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." Jesus went into the Temple to see that all was in order in His Father's House; yet, although He saw there the same scenes of disorder which He had witnessed three years before, He did not treat the buyers and sellers as He had done then, but, as it was now evening, leaving them in their evil ways for the moment, He returned to Bethany, where He spent the night.

The Lamb of God.

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem corresponded, as we have seen, with the very day on which, by the appointment of the Law (Exod. xii. 3), the lamb without spot or blemish was brought into the city to be kept till the time for slaying it at the Passover. To show, moreover, that in Himself all the figures of the Old Law were realised, our Saviour chose the very night for the institution of the Pasch of the New Law, the Blessed Eucharist, which was appointed for the immolation of the Paschal Lamb in the Old Law; and the very day (the 15th of Nisan) for the redemption of the world on which the people of God had formerly been redeemed from the Egyptian bondage.†

* Christ's prophecy was rigidly fulfilled forty years later, when the Romans, under Titus, besieged and took Jerusalem, A.D. 70.

† See vol. i., p. 106.

Fulfilment of Zacharias's prophecy.

The prophecy of Zacharias, quoted at the head of this chapter, was fulfilled in the minutest detail. To lay stress on this fact, and to show that in none other than Jesus was that prophecy fulfilled, St. John Chrysostom challenges the Jews to point out to him any other king of theirs who had entered Jerusalem riding on an ass. We see, too, in the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, our Lord giving a faint picture of His real kingly dignity before He suffered. By allowing Himself to be thus publicly acknowledged as the Messias, He wished to confirm the faith of His disciples, and to leave His enemies no excuse for their incredulity. Even in His triumph, as indeed in all His actions, we behold magnificence admirably blended with humility: "Thy King cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass."

Monday, the 11th of Nisan. The barren fig-tree.

Next morning, as Jesus was returning to the city, He was hungry; and seeing a fig-tree by the wayside, He drew near to see if perchance there might be fruit upon it—not that it was yet the season for figs, but because of the unusual abundance of leaves it displayed at so early a season of the year. Yet not a single fig was to be found thereon. He then pronounced upon the barren tree this doom: "May no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever."

Barrenness of the Synagogue.

This hunger, though real and pressing, as St. John Chrysostom remarks, was mysterious, and afforded an opportunity of giving instructions both to the Jews and to all His disciples. By the fig-tree was represented the Jewish Synagogue, while the hunger of Christ was a figure of His extreme desire of finding it productive of good works corresponding to the careful cultivation He had bestowed upon it for upwards of three years. Its leaves were the Jews' pompous show of exterior

service, the barren foliage of their legal rites, void of the fruit of good works, the only valuable produce of the tree. Moreover, the reprobation of the Synagogue is represented by the withering of the tree subsequent to Christ's imprecation. There is no time nor season when the servants of God can be excused from bringing forth good works.

Purification of the Temple.

When Jesus was come into the Temple, He proceeded to cast out those who profaned the sacred edifice, as He had already done at the beginning of His public ministry. They were a large company; for many of the Jews who came to the Temple were from distant parts, and did not bring with them their victims for the sacrifice, but purchased them in Jerusalem. To supply their wants a number of dealers and money-changers were accustomed to take up their position in the sacred precincts of the Temple itself. Filled with zeal for His Father's honour, Jesus overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the chairs of those who sold doves, saying to them: "It is written: *My* House shall be called the House of prayer to all nations; but you have made it a den of thieves."

Jesus puts to silence the priests and the Scribes.

This done, Jesus began to teach; and, although the chief priests and the Scribes sought how they might put Him to death, they feared to lay hands on Him because the people were in admiration at His doctrine, and listened to Him with rapt attention. The sick, too, the blind and the lame were brought to Him, and He healed them; and such was the excitement of those who saw these wonders that even the children, in imitation of their elders, cried out: "Hosanna to the Son of David!" This incensed the chief priests and the Pharisees beyond measure, and, burning with rage, they indignantly demanded: "Hearest Thou what these say?" "Have you not read," He answered, "Out of

the mouth of infants and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" (Ps. viii. 3). Shortly after this He left the Temple, and, as on the previous evening, again went to Bethany.

CHAPTER XLII

LAST DAY OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY—HIS AUTHORITY QUESTIONED—PARABLES OF THE HUSBANDMEN AND THE MARRIAGE-FEAST

Matt. XXI., XXII.; Mark XI., XII.; Luke XX.

"What is there that I ought to do more to My vineyard that I have not done to it?" (Isa. v. 4).

"The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner" (Ps. cxvii. 22).

Tuesday, the 12th of Nisan.

We have now come to the last day of our Lord's public teaching. On this day, when again on His way to Jerusalem with His disciples, He arrived at the spot where, on the previous day, He had cursed the barren fig-tree. Seeing that the tree was dried up, the disciples were amazed, and Peter directed the attention of our Saviour to it: "Behold the fig-tree which Thou didst curse is withered away."

Faith and prayer.

Jesus took advantage of Peter's remark to instruct them on the power of faith and prayer: "Amen, I say to you, if you shall have faith and stagger not, not only this of the fig-tree shall you do, but also if you shall say to this mountain: Be thou removed and cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive." He also pointed out the necessity of mutual forgiveness as a condition of God's

hearing our prayer: "When you pray, forgive, if you have aught against any man, that your Father who is in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Christ's authority questioned.

As Jesus was teaching in the Temple, the chief priests and the ancients of the people came to Him and formally asked: "By what authority dost Thou do these things? and who is he that hath given Thee this authority?" He, however, did not gratify them by a direct answer, because they only questioned Him through captious and improper motives, but replied by casting on them similar difficulties to those in which they sought to entangle Him. They believed, or at least through fear of the Jews they outwardly professed to believe, in what was preached by John the Baptist, yet they would not believe in Him or in His doctrine to whom John had given testimony when he said: "Behold the Lamb of God: behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world." Proposing, then, a counter-question to them, He asked: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men? Answer you Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things." Now, they thought that if they said from heaven, He would ask them why they did not believe in Him; and that if they said from men, the people, who were persuaded that John was a prophet, would stone them. They therefore answered: "We know not." Then said Jesus to them: "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Parable of the Two Sons.

Following on the mention of the Baptist, Jesus thus introduced the Parable of the Two Sons:—A certain man had two sons, and coming to the first, he said: "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." The son refused, but later on repented and obeyed. The second son, on being asked to go into the vineyard, promised to do so, but did not go. "Which of

the two," asked our Saviour, "did the father's will?" At once they answered: "The first." Then Jesus added: "Amen, I say to you that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you. John came to you in the way of justice, and you did not believe him; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. But you, seeing it, did not even afterwards repent that you might believe him."

Meaning of the parable.

By the first son is generally understood the Gentiles, as also the publicans and scandalous sinners; and by the second the Jewish people. The former, who at first did not obey, would not worship and serve God; yet afterwards they received the faith, and, being converted, became faithful servants of God. The Jews, or the greater part of them, who pretended to be God's servants and His people, rejected the Gospel and their Messias; therefore "the publicans and the harlots shall go before them into the kingdom of God." In this way did our Lord try to make the Jewish people sensible of their ingratitude and of the ready obedience of the cast-off Gentiles. The latter, who had never heard of the Law nor promised obedience to it, showed their submission to the voice of God by their works; whereas the Jews, after promising to obey it, neglected the performance of their promise.

Jesus openly reproves the Jews.

Jesus, finding that His enemies still remained in their unbelief in spite of all He had done to convince them, at length openly reproved them, and confirmed His threat of transferring the blessing of the faith to the Gentiles. He told them in plain terms that they should be forsaken and punished for their blindness and obstinacy, and set before them still more striking pictures of their guilt and of their rejection in the Parables of the Husbandmen and the Marriage-Feast.

Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen.

A certain householder planted a vineyard, and having made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, he let it out to husbandmen, and then went into a far country. When the time of the vintage drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen that they might receive the fruits thereof; but the husbandmen, laying hands on his servants, beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. Last of all he sent his own son, believing that at least they would reverence him. But when they saw the son, they said to one another: "This is the heir: come let us kill him, and we shall have the inheritance." Then, taking him, they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. "What, therefore," asked our Saviour, "will the lord of the vineyard do to them?" They say to Him: "He will bring these evil men to an evil end, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen that shall render him the fruit in due season." Jesus said to them: "Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Therefore I say to you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be bruised; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder."

The chief priests and the Pharisees at once knew that He spoke of them; and seeking to lay hands on Him they feared the people, because they took Him for a prophet. The Jews themselves were wont to expound "The Head of the Corner" as relating to the Messias; and our Lord showed them that, although they, who should have been the architects, had rejected Him, yet was He hereafter to become the chief Corner-stone to unite the Jews and the Gentiles into one Christian Church. In this Parable of the Hus-

bandmen He reminds the Jews that the providence of God had wonderfully watched over them from the beginning; that nothing had been omitted to promote their salvation; and that, although His Prophets had been put to most cruel deaths, still the Almighty had at length sent down His only Son, who was to suffer at their hands the inexpressible ignominies and tortures of the cross.

Parable of the Wedding-Garment.

In the Parable of the Marriage-Feast, or of the Wedding-Garment, our Saviour again proceeds to declare to the Jews their reprobation and the call of the Gentiles; their ingratitude, and His tender solicitude for them.

"The kingdom of heaven," He said, "is like to a king who made a marriage-feast for his son. And he sent his servants to call those that were invited, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants to tell them that his beeves and fatlings were killed, and that all things were ready. This invitation they also neglected and went their way, one to his farm and another to his merchandise, while the rest laid hands on his servants, and, after treating them contumeliously, put them to death.* Filled with rage at such unnatural conduct, the king sent his army against those murderers, destroyed them, and burnt their city. Then he said to his servants: The wedding indeed is ready, but they that were invited were not worthy: go ye, therefore, into the highways, and as many as you shall find, invite to the wedding. This they did, and brought back with them all that they found, both good and bad without exception, and the banquet-chamber was filled. When all the guests were seated the king went in to see them, and found there a man who had not on a wedding-garment. He asked: How camest thou in hither not

* In this way the Jews had many times treated the Prophets, God's messengers to them.

having on a wedding-garment? But the man remained silent. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

Christ had before told the Jews that publicans and harlots should in preference to them inherit the kingdom of heaven; and that the first should be last and the last first. Both good and bad were invited to the marriage-feast, to teach us that the Church of God does not consist of the elect only; but the latter part of the parable teaches that faith alone, without the wedding-garment of charity and good works, will not suffice to save us.

CHAPTER XLIII

LAST DAY OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY (*continued*)—CHRIST, DAVID'S SON—THE WIDOW'S MITE—CERTAIN GENTILES DESIRE TO SEE JESUS

Matt. XXII., XXIII.; Mark XII.; Luke XX., XXI.; John XII.

"I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God o. Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exod. iii. 6).

"And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach, to see it always" (Dan. xii. 2).

Pharisees and Herodians.

EACH party of our Saviour's enemies in turn tried to draw from Him some expression which they might turn against Him and thus bring about His ruin. First of all some Pharisees united with the Herodians, who were friendly to the Roman power, and proposed a question to Him which was so framed that it seemed certain to evoke a compromising answer. "Master," they said, "we know that Thou art a true

speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man. Tell us, therefore, what dost Thou think? Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?"

Now, it was a question much agitated among the Jews at that time whether they, being the peculiar people of God, ought to be subject and pay taxes to any prince whatsoever. The question, therefore, was insidious in the extreme; and it seemed impossible to answer it without incurring the displeasure of one or other of the parties. If He affirmed that the payment was lawful, He would expose Himself to the hatred of the Jews; whereas, if He denied the legality of the tax, He would incur the displeasure of the Herodians and be denounced to Cæsar.

"Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

Jesus, who knew their malice, replied: "Why do you tempt Me, ye hypocrites? Show Me the coin of the tribute." And they offered Him a penny. He asked them whose image it was that was stamped upon it. "Cæsar's," they answered. "Then," said He, "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." Marvelling at His wisdom, but disappointed, they retired in confusion.

Jesus confutes the Sadducees.

The Sadducees next came forward to try what they could effect. They trusted to confound Him with one of the objections they had conceived against the resurrection of the body, and to disprove at the same time a doctrine which they themselves denied. They, moreover, thought so to perplex our Saviour as to make Him an object of ridicule. They asked Him, if a woman had had in succession seven husbands, whose wife she would be at the resurrection. Had they known, He said, the power of God and the Scriptures, which contained abundant testimonies of a resur-

rection, they would not have fallen into their error: "For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven": in that they, like unto angels, will be endowed with immortality and impassibility, and their joys will be wholly spiritual.

The resurrection of the body.

He then went on to prove to them the truth of the resurrection of the body from that of the immortality of the soul. These doctrines are of their very nature inseparable; for the soul, being immortal, ought necessarily to be one day reunited to the body, to receive therein the recompense or punishment which it has merited when clothed with this same body. Now, the Sadducees were a profane sect who, as we have seen, not only denied the resurrection of the body, but even the possibility of a supernatural world; nor did they, it is supposed, receive any of the Inspired Writings but the five Books of Moses. Christ therefore showed them, from a passage in Exodus (iii. 6), that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had still a being; because God, two hundred years after the death of the last, thus spoke to Moses: "I am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Therefore these souls had then a being; for the Lord would not call Himself the God of those who were not at all, as no one would call himself lord or king of those who are no more: "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The Sadducees certainly understood not the power of God, as He had already told them; for how could it be difficult for that power, which created and formed all things from nothing, to raise up the body again after it had been reduced to ashes? or impossible to prepare, in a future state, rewards and enjoyments superior to and widely different from anything that is seen in our present state of existence?

* Not "I was."

The people who had listened to our Lord's words were in admiration at His teaching; and even the Scribes, seeing the Sadducees thus silenced, seem to have sided entirely with Him. "Master," they exclaimed, "Thou hast said well"; and, apprehensive of being exposed to a similar discomfiture themselves, they were afraid to ask Him any more questions.

The great commandment.

When the Pharisees saw the Sadducees—a rival sect—frustrated in their attempt to bring derision on our Saviour, they themselves assembled together, that in their numbers they might make a final effort to confound Him, since in all their arguments they had failed to get the better of Him. One of them, a Doctor of the Law, whom they chose as their spokesman, approached our Lord, and asked Him, tempting Him: "Master, which is the great commandment of the Law?" Jesus answered: "The first commandment of all is: Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength. And the second is like to it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

Our Lord's reply took the lawyer completely by surprise. "Well, Master," he exclaimed, "Thou hast said in truth that there is one God, and there is no other besides Him. And that He should be loved with the whole heart, and with the whole understanding, and with the whole soul, and with the whole strength: and to love one's neighbour as oneself is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices." Seeing that he had answered wisely, Jesus said to him: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." The Pharisees, thus refuted, turned away, and no man after that durst ask Him any questions.

This excellence of charity, as St. Bede observes, teaches us that faith alone is not sufficient for salvation. All then does not depend on faith. Although, in the order of time, it is the first act elicited in obtaining justification, much more depends on charity, which is the love of God and our neighbour, and which is the sum of all the Law and the Prophets.

Faith to be conjoined with charity.

The time was now come when Jesus was in His turn to question His persecutors, and to lay bare their ill-concealed hypocrisy. It was allowed that the Messias was of a truth to be the Son of David. But our Saviour proves to them from David's own words that the Messias was the Lord as well as the Son of David. This they were unable to explain. Looking on the assembled Scribes and Pharisees, He asked: "What think you of Christ? whose son is He?" On their answering that He was David's, He said: "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on My right hand, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?" This question, which clearly implies the Divinity of the promised Messias and the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, they could not answer. In it He clearly shows the Pharisees that there are two natures in the Messias, in one of which, viz., His human nature, He is the Son of David; whereas in the other, viz., His Divine nature, He is the Son of God, and consequently superior to David; for if Christ be man only and the Son of David, how does David, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, call Him Lord?

Christ, David's Son.

Similar reproaches to those which, on a previous occasion, He had cast upon the Pharisees, He now directs equally against the Scribes. Both of these sects were filled with the same spirit of pride and vanity, which showed itself in their dress, in

Condemnation of Scribes and Pharisees.

their exterior, and in every part of their conduct. "Beware of the Scribes, who desire to walk in long robes, and love salutations in the market-place, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; who, feigning long prayer, devour the houses of widows. These shall receive the greater damnation." Thus did they, as well as the Pharisees, not only commit ordinary evil actions, but also made their prayers and virtue itself a cloak for their hypocrisy and vanity, and the cause of their greater depravity. On both alike He, in the most solemn manner, pronounced woes for keeping the kingdom of heaven shut against men. He called them whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones. Foreseeing that they were about to surpass their worst crimes by putting Him to death, who was the Lord of all the prophets whom their fathers had slain, He declared to them that the justice of God should fall upon them with such a final vengeance as would comprise all the different kinds of judgments and punishments that had at any time before been inflicted for the shedding of just blood: "That upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the Temple and the altar."

Jesus laments over Jerusalem.

From these words of wrath and condemnation He turned to expressions of mourning and tender reproach, and repeated His lamentation over Jerusalem, which He would gladly have gathered to Himself as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but she would not. He pronounced her doom of desolation for thus rejecting her Saviour, and foretold that she would be laid waste through the judgment of God till she should be converted and acknowledge her Lord.

The widow's mite.

As Jesus sat over against the treasury, He watched the people casting into it their gifts. Many that were rich cast in much, but there came up a poor widow who dropped in two mites, which together make a farthing; whereupon Jesus called His disciples to Him and said: "Amen I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all they that have cast into the treasury, for they all did cast in of their abundance; but she, of her want, cast in all she had, even her whole living."

Some Gentiles desire to see Jesus.

Some Gentiles, probably Greeks, who had come to the Feast, desired to see Jesus, and made known their wish to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee. They were either proselytes to the Jewish faith, or such as owned and served the one true God. They could only enter into that part of the Temple called the Court of the Gentiles. Philip and Andrew introduced them to our Saviour, who would appear to have expected their coming, for He at once addressed them: "Amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. . . .* If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My minister be. If any man minister to Me, him will My Father honour. Now is My soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour." Christ permitted this fear and horror to come upon His human nature as He did afterwards in the garden of Gethsemani; yet presently He continued: "But for this I came unto this hour." This was the *third time* that Jesus declared His readiness to die, as though He would say: "I came into the world for this end, that I might die on

* By this grain, according to St. Augustine, our Saviour means Himself, who was to die by the infidelity of the Jews, and be multiplied by the faith of the Gentiles.

the cross for all mankind." "Father," He added, "glorify Thy name."

A Voice from heaven.

Straightway a Voice from heaven was heard: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The people failed to understand both the Voice and its signification; and some of those who were present compared it to thunder, while others said it was an angel that spoke. Jesus said to them: "This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself." This He said, signifying His death on the cross. The multitude answered Him: "We have heard out of the Law that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest Thou: The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" Jesus said to them: "Yet a little while, the light is among you.* Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not. He that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light."

Thus with words of promise to those who believed in Him, but of warning to such as in their malice abused and despised the graces which He offered them, Jesus withdrew. Many even of the chief rulers believed in Him; but, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess their belief that they might not be cast out of the Synagogue: "For they loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God."

* That is, "for a very few days, I, who am the Light of the world, am with you."

CHAPTER XLIV

LAST DAY OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY (*continued*)—HE FORETELLS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE—HIS SECOND ADVENT

Matt. XXIV., XXV.; Mark XIII.; Luke XXI.

"There shall be in the Temple the abomination of desolation; and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end" (Dan. ix. 27).

Jesus foretells the destruction of the Temple.

After the fatigues of preaching and teaching, Jesus left the Temple towards evening to go to Mount Olivet. As He was going out of the sacred building, the disciples called His attention to its magnificence and glory, for they had heard Him declare that it would be destroyed, and they were surprised that so beautiful an edifice should be brought to ruin. Jesus said to them: "Do you see all these things? Amen I say to you, there shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down."

The disciples question Jesus.

That same evening, as soon as they had reached the Mount of Olives, and while they were sitting in full view of the Temple, the disciples asked Him privately when His predictions would come to pass, and what would be the sign of His coming, and of the consummation of the world. Here we have three distinct inquiries: one relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, one to the coming of Christ, and the third to the end of the world. And it is with reference to these three questions that Christ's answers and predictions are to be expounded in this chapter.

He commenced by replying to the second part of their inquiry as being the most important, and afterwards dealt simultaneously with the other two, inasmuch as the

miseries that were to attend the destruction of the city and the Temple were a figure of the calamities that were to happen before the last day, in the time of Antichrist. "Take heed lest any man deceive you; for many shall come in My name, saying: 'I am He'; and they shall deceive many. And when you shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, fear ye not; for such things must needs be; but the end is not yet. These things are the beginning of sorrows.

The beginning of sorrows.

"But before all these things they will lay hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, dragging you before kings and governors for My name's sake. And when they shall lead you and deliver you up, be not thoughtful beforehand what you shall speak; but whatever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost. And the brother shall betray his brother unto death, and the father his son; and the children shall rise up against the parents, and shall work their death. And you shall be hated by all men for My name's sake; but a hair of your head shall not perish. In your patience you shall possess your souls. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall seduce many; but he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved. And the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come.

Signs to come.

"And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed about with an army, know that the destruction thereof is at hand. And when you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the Holy Place: he that readeth let him understand: then let them that are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house,

The days of vengeance.

nor enter therein to take anything out of the house; and let him that shall be in the field not turn back to take up his coat. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled that are written. But woe to them that are with child and give suck in those days; for there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. But pray that your flight be not in the winter, or on the Sabbath:* for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be. And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh should be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the nations be fulfilled.

Christ's second coming.

"Then if any man shall say to you: Lo, here is Christ, or there: do not believe him; for there shall rise up false Christs and false prophets, and they shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand. If, therefore, they shall say to you: Behold He is in the desert, go ye not out: behold He is in the closets, believe it not: for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together.†

"And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her

* The winter would be an inconvenient time for flight, as also the Sabbath, when one was allowed to travel only some two miles.

† By this *body* many understand Christ Himself, who died for us; and they tell us that at His second coming the angels and saints, like eagles, with incredible swiftness, will join Him at the place of judgment.

light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be moved, and then shall appear the sign* of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty. And He shall send His angels with a trumpet and a great voice; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption is at hand.

Signs that will precede His coming.

"And from the fig-tree learn a parable. When the branch thereof is now tender, and the leaves come forth, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see all these things, know that the kingdom of God is at hand. Amen I say to you, that this generation† shall not pass till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

Parable of the Fig-tree.

"But of that day and hour no one knoweth, no, not the angels of heaven: but the Father alone. Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is. As a snare it shall come upon the earth, as in the days of Noe. Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Two women shall be grinding corn, one shall be taken, and one shall be left. It shall be even as when a man, going into a far country, left his house, and gave authority to his servants over every work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the

Watch.

* The Fathers generally suppose this to be the Cross of Christ which shall be seen in the sky.

† The nation of the Jews shall not cease to exist till all these things shall be accomplished—*i.e.*, it shall continue to the end of the world.

Lord of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning;* lest, coming on a sudden, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

Fulfilment of the prophecy.

A part of this prediction was beyond all doubt accomplished in the first persecutions raised by the Jews against the infant Christian Church; but the entire and literal completion of it is reserved for the latter times. What is said about the abomination of desolation was partly fulfilled by divers profanations of the Temple, as when the image of Cæsar was set up in the Temple by Pilate, or that of Adrian in the Holy of Holies, and when the sacrifices were abolished; but it will be more completely fulfilled by Antichrist and his persecutors when they shall attempt to abolish the Holy Mass. The Prophet Daniel (xii. 11) calculates the reign of Antichrist *from the time when the daily sacrifice* shall be taken away, that is, as is generally supposed, from the time of the suppression of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Josephus relates the tribulations and calamities that befell Jerusalem (70 A.D.), which verified to the very letter the prediction: "There shall be such tribulation as hath not been from the world until now." In his history of the war in which it was destroyed by Titus, he relates at length many of the prodigies which were the forerunners of this dreadful end of the unfortunate city. He informs us that during a whole year a meteor, like a flaming sword, was seen hanging over the city; that there appeared in the air what seemed to be chariots and numerous armies pressing upon one another; and that on the night of Pentecost

* These times are generally referred to the different ages of man's life—infancy, youth, manhood, and old age. We are exhorted to be always in readiness to meet our Judge.

the priests, after a confused noise, distinctly heard these words, "Let us go hence," which are supposed to have been spoken by the angels who had hitherto guarded and protected the Holy City, but who were now taking their leave of it.

CHAPTER XLV.

LAST DAY OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY (*continued*)—THE PARABLES OF THE TEN VIRGINS AND OF THE TALENTS—THE LAST JUDGMENT—TREASON OF JUDAS.

Matt. XXV., XXVI.; Mark XIV.; Luke XXII.

"Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and harbourless into thy house: when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh" (Isa. lviii. 7).

THE exhortation to watchfulness inculcated by our Saviour in the words of the foregoing chapter He still further enforced by the Parables of the Ten Virgins and of the Talents.

Parable of the Ten Virgins.

"The kingdom of heaven," He said, "shall be like to ten virgins who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish and five were wise. Now, the five foolish took their lamps, but did not take oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And while the bridegroom delayed, they all slumbered and slept; but at midnight they were awakened by the cry: 'Behold the bridegroom cometh: go ye forth to meet him.'

"At once the virgins rose up to trim their lamps; but the foolish, who had made no provision of oil, finding that their lamps had gone out, said to the wise: 'Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.' The others

answered: 'Lest there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.' This they did; but before they could return, the bridegroom came; and they who were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. At last came also the other virgins, who, after calling aloud to be admitted, only heard those terrible words: 'Amen I say to you, I know you not.' Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour."

Parable of the Talents.

In the Parable of the Talents, as in the Parable of the Pounds, our Lord compares Himself to a man who is about to make a long journey, and who entrusts his goods to his servants, commanding them to trade therewith till he shall return. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another only one. The first two doubled the number of talents entrusted to them, and each, on the master's return, was greeted with the words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." But he that had received only one talent next presented himself before his master and said: "Lord, I know that thou art a hard man: thou reapest what thou hast not sown, and gatherest what thou hast not strewed; and, being afraid, I went and hid thy talent in the earth: behold, here thou hast what is thine." Thereupon his master uttered those awful words of reproach: "Thou evil and slothful servant, thou knewest this: thou oughtest, therefore, to have committed my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received it with usury." He then commanded the talent to be taken from him and given to him that had ten, and condemned the unprofitable servant to be cast out into the exterior darkness.

Jesus ended His discourse by unfolding to His disciples the terrors of the great judgment day. "When the Son

of Man," He said, "shall come in His majesty, and all His angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His majesty; and all the nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left. Then shall the King say to those on His right: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me in: naked, and you clothed Me: sick, and you visited Me: I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

The great judgment day.

"Then shall the just answer Him: 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee: thirsty, and gave Thee to drink? And when did we see Thee a stranger, and took Thee in: or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when did we see Thee sick, or in prison, and came to Thee?' And the King shall say: 'Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it to Me.'

The corporal works of mercy.

"Then shall He say to those on His left: 'Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink: naked, and you clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' And in reply to their question, when did they see Him thus, He shall answer: 'As long as you did it not to one of these least ones, neither did you do it to Me.' And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting."

"Depart from Me, ye cursed."

When Jesus had ended these words, He informed His disciples of the deeds of blood that were so soon to be

perpetrated at Jerusalem, lest they should be disheartened when they saw their Master condemned to die on a cross: "You know that, after two days, shall be the Pasch, and the Son of Man shall be delivered up to be crucified."

The rulers conspire to seize Jesus.

In the meantime, the chief priests and the ancients of the people again met at the palace of the High-Priests, to consult how, by craft, they might apprehend Jesus and put Him to death. Their deliberations were presided over by Caiphas. Now, they were afraid to put Him to death on the Festival Day, not through a motive of religion, but lest a tumult should happen in His favour among the people who looked on Him as a great Prophet.

Treason of Judas.

Hitherto their plan for seizing Him in the Temple, or for bringing Him into disfavour with the Roman government, or of stirring up popular feeling against Him, had been thwarted by the enthusiasm of the multitude in His favour, and by His prudence and wisdom in replying to their subtle and captious questions. There remained but one course open to them now, namely, to lay hands upon Him in His retirement; and this very night a most fortunate circumstance came to their aid. Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, the one who, at the feast of Bethany, regretted the expense of the perfumes that had been used on his Lord and Master, now, doubtless, wishing to make good the loss, came to the assembled priests and elders, and asked what they would give him, and he would deliver Jesus unto them. He accepted their offer of thirty pieces of silver, and from that moment sought an opportunity of betraying our Divine Lord to them. Thus it was avarice that moved the impious wretch to betray his loving Master, and for the paltry consideration of thirty pieces of silver to plunge from the heights of his

sublime vocation to the lowest depths of disgrace and perdition.

Wednesday, the 13th of Nisan.

All during Wednesday Jesus did not appear either in the Temple or in Jerusalem, but remained at Bethany, where He stayed till the afternoon of Thursday. A solemn silence, remarks Dr. Smith, rests over this brief period of His life. In the very last week of His ministry, after three days of incessant activity, He secured this unbroken interval of holy contemplation as the fittest preparation for His Passion.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE LAST SUPPER

Matt XXVI.; Mark XIV.; Luke XXII.; John XIII.

"Even the man of My peace, in whom I trusted, who ate My bread, hath greatly supplanted Me" (Ps. xl. 10).

"For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation" (Mal. i. 11).

"Thou art a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech" (Ps. cix. 4).

Thursday, the 14th of Nisan.

The time appointed in the Law for killing the Paschal Lamb was on the 14th day of the month of Nisan, "between the evenings," and after sunset began the great Feast of Azymes or Unleavened Bread;* for the Jews, as we have seen, began their feasts from sunset on the foregoing day. When the first day of the Azymes† came, on which

* On the evening of the 14th there was to be no leavened bread in any of the houses. Consequently, when the Paschal supper was over, Christ consecrated the Blessed Eucharist, in all probability in unleavened bread, as the Latin Church still continues to do.

† The Feast of Unleavened Bread did not properly begin till the time of eating the Paschal meal, so that the 15th of Nisan was strictly the first day of the Feast. But as it was customary for the Jews to remove all leaven bread about noon on the 14th, in prepara-

it was necessary that the Paschal Lamb should be killed, Jesus bade Peter and John go and get ready the Pasch. In answer to their question, where they should prepare it, He directed them to go into the city, where they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water, and to follow him even into the house he should enter, and say to him: "The Master saith to thee: 'Where is the guest-chamber where I may eat the Pasch with My disciples?'" And he would show them a large dining-room furnished. There they were to prepare. They went, and found everything as Jesus had said to them, and they made ready the Pasch.

The Passover.

The Passover was the most solemn rite of the Old Law. When God ordered the Israelites to sprinkle the blood of the lamb upon their door-posts, it was solely with a view to signifying that the blood of the true Lamb was to be the distinctive mark of as many as should be saved. Everything about the rite was mysterious and prophetical. A bone of the lamb was not to be broken; and they broke not the arms or legs of Jesus on the cross. The lamb was to be free from blemish, to express the perfect sanctity of Jesus Christ, the immaculate Lamb of God. The Paschal Lamb was to be sacrificed and eaten, because Christ was to suffer and die for us; and unless we eat His Flesh we shall have no life in us. The door-posts of the Israelites were to be sprinkled with blood that the destroying angel might pass over them; and with the Blood of Christ our souls are to be purified that sin and death may not prevail against us. In every house was eaten a whole lamb; and Christ, in the Holy Communion, is received whole and entire by every faithful soul.

When the appointed hour in the evening was come, Jesus sat down, and the Twelve with Him, to eat the

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tion for the Feast, it was usual to call this "*the day*," or, as Matthew and Mark have it, the first day of Unleavened Bread.

Pasch. It was then that He uttered those words of expressive earnestness: "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer: for I say to you, that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then, as Master of the repast, He took the cup containing the wine, which He blessed and gave to all the guests, telling them to divide it amongst them, and that He Himself would not drink of the fruit of the vine till the kingdom of God should come—*i.e.*, from this hour of the supper to the time of His resurrection. Knowing that His hour was come, when He should pass out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

The evening ushering in the 15th of Nisan. The Paschal Supper.

And whilst they were eating, Jesus said to them: "Amen I say to you that one of you is about to betray Me." His words must have come as a warning voice to Judas to break away, while there was yet time, from the bonds which Satan was weaving to enclose him; while they filled the rest of the Apostles with alarm. Fearful for his own weakness, lest through human frailty he should fall into so great a crime, and not daring to fix a suspicion on any one of his fellow Apostles, each began anxiously to inquire: "Is it I, Lord?" He did not give them a direct answer, nor did He here manifest the traitor, but replied: "He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, the same shall betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goeth as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed. It were better for that man if he had not been born."

Jesus makes known the traitor.

After the other disciples had put their questions, and our Lord had finished speaking, Judas at length ventures to inquire of himself. With his usual hypocrisy he wishes to clothe over his wicked designs by asking a similar

question with the rest: "Is it I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered him: "Thou hast said it." The answer might have been spoken in so low a tone of voice as not to have been perfectly heard by the rest, for immediately after we find St. Peter beckoning to the beloved disciple, St. John, and asking him: "Who is it of whom He speaketh?" The beloved disciple, therefore, as he reclined next to Jesus at supper, with his head resting on the bosom of his Divine Master, besought Him to tell them who the traitor was. In answer to his request Jesus replied: "He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped." And when He had dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. After Judas had taken the morsel, Satan entered into his heart, filling it with the most deadly malice. Jesus said to him: "What thou doest, do quickly." Judas then rose up and went out immediately, yet did the rest not fully understand the extent of his treachery, but supposed that, as he kept the purse, he had been commissioned by Jesus to make some purchases for the feast, or to give something to the poor. The night had now set in, and Judas hastened away to the rulers to concert how and where they might arrest Jesus.

Who shall be the greatest?

Now, while they were sitting at table, there arose a dispute among the Apostles as to which of them should be the greatest. Jesus said to them: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them;* and they that have power over them are called beneficent. But not so you: but he who is the greatest among you, let him be the least; and he that is leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth. And you are they that have continued with Me in My

* They tyrannise over those who are under them by arbitrary and violent proceedings, yet they desire to be looked upon as benefactors and saviours.

temptation. And I appoint to you, as My Father hath appointed to Me, a kingdom ; that you may eat and drink in My kingdom, and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus washes His disciples' feet.

And to show His Apostles, as well as all who wish to be His true disciples, with what eagerness they ought to perform the duties of humility, He rose up after supper was ended, laid aside His garments, and girding Himself with a towel like a servant, poured water into a basin, and began to wash and wipe the feet of His Apostles.

Peter's humility.

When it came to Peter's turn, he felt ashamed of his unworthiness, and with his wonted ardour exclaimed : " Lord, dost Thou wash my feet ?" Jesus answered : " What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Neither Peter, nor the others, knew the full significance of this act by which our Lord would prepare them to become the invited guests of that more Sacred Banquet which was so soon to follow ; hence it was that St. Peter affirmed : " Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet." " If I wash them not," said Jesus, " thou shalt have no part with Me." At once, to show how much he dreaded such a separation, Peter eagerly cried out : " Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." Jesus replied that he whose feet He washed was altogether clean ; and that they, His Apostles, were clean, yet not all, having in His mind the traitor Judas. This act immediately preceded the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, and was significant of the very great purity expected of those who approach the Sacred Banquet.

Resuming His garments, Jesus sat down, and told them that he who would be His follower must prove himself by his humility : " If I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's

feet. Amen, amen, I say to you: The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is the Apostle greater than He that sent him."

The institution of the Holy Sacrament.

Then, that the truth or reality might succeed to the figure in one and the same banquet, and to impress more deeply on our minds the remembrance of so signal a favour, His last and best gift to man, Jesus, after partaking with His disciples of the Paschal Lamb, next proceeded to the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, the crowning act of His love. We have seen how He prepared the minds of His followers for the reception of this great mystery, first at the marriage-feast of Cana, when He changed the water into wine, and again by the multiplication of the loaves and the fishes. On another occasion He had promised His disciples to give them the Bread of Life, and that the Bread which He would give them was His flesh for the life of the world: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (St. John vi.). Now, on the eve of His Passion, when He was about to die, would He fulfil His promise and leave us this great testimony of His love.

After He had washed the feet of the Apostles, and while they were yet at table, He took bread into His sacred and venerable hands, and blessed, and broke, and gave to them, saying: "Take ye, and eat: this is My Body." In like manner, taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and bade them all drink of it, saying: "Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." He then added: "Do this for a commemoration of Me."

Thus, by His word, and by His Divine power, Christ changed what was before bread and wine into His own most precious Body and Blood. The elements of bread and

wine were truly, really, and substantially changed into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood. Christ, whose Divine power cannot be questioned, could not have made use of plainer words to express the change He Himself had effected. And it has been the constant doctrine and belief of the Catholic Church in all ages, both in the East and in the West, that when the words He used are pronounced by those duly qualified, the same change of bread and wine into His Body and Blood is brought about. The Holy Eucharist is not only a *Sacrament*, but also a *Sacrifice*, succeeding all the sacrifices of the Old Law; and this Sacrifice Christ commanded all the priests of the New Law to offer up when He said: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." He not only gave the power, but the command, to His Apostles, and their successors, the bishops and priests of His Church, to consecrate and to offer up the same to the end of time. In this institution of the Blessed Eucharist, how clearly do we see verified the words of the Psalmist: "Thou art a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech!"

The Holy Eucharist a Sacrament and Sacrifice.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE NEW COMMANDMENT OF LOVE — PETER'S DENIAL FORETOLD — CHRIST'S DISCOURSE AFTER THE LAST SUPPER

Matt. XXVI.; Mark XIV.; Luke XX.; John XIII., XVII.

"Consider My enemies, for they are multiplied, and have hated Me with an unjust hatred" (Ps. xxiv. 19).

"May his days be few; and his bishopric let another take" (Ps. cviii. 8).

Jesus announced to His Apostles that the time was at hand when the Son of Man should be glorified, and when God should be glorified in Him; that He would be with

them yet a little while, but that where He was going they could not yet come, but should follow Him afterwards. He then repeated to them the new commandment of love, the commandment of the New Covenant, enlarging upon it, and explaining that it must even imitate His love for us: "Love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

The commandment of love.

With his accustomed zeal, Peter declared his intention of following his Divine Master whithersoever He went, even if it meant the laying down of his life for Him. "Simon, Simon," said our Blessed Lord, "behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." "Lord," answered Peter, "I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death." "All you," said Jesus, "shall be scandalised in Me this night: for it is written: I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed" (Zach. xiii. 7): "but after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." Peter answered Him: "Although all shall be scandalised in Thee, I will never be scandalised." "Amen, I say to thee," responded Jesus, "in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou wilt deny Me thrice." Despite this assurance Peter did but declare the more vehemently: "Although I should die together with Thee, I will not deny Thee"; and in like manner said all the disciples.

Jesus foretells Peter's denial.

Jesus reminded them that now was the time of danger, that hitherto they had not stood in need of anything, but now they must provide for themselves, and he who had not a sword must buy one. Not understanding the hidden meaning of His words, but thinking they would have need of swords against the attack of the traitor, they

said: "Behold, Lord, here are two swords." "It is enough," Jesus answered.

Promise of the Paraclete.

Knowing that His sufferings and death were fast approaching, He spoke words of consolation to His disciples, and bade them not to be troubled, but to believe in Him and in His words. In His Father's house, He said, were many mansions, and He was going to prepare a place for them. "Whatsoever you ask the Father in My Name," He added, "that will I do; that the Father may be glorified in the Son." If they truly loved Him, they would testify their affection for Him by a faithful observance of His commandments: "If you love Me, keep My commandments." He would not leave them orphans, He said, but would send them a Comforter, another Paraclete, who should abide with them for ever: "The Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not; but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you. The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in My Name will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Now I will not speak many things with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath not anything. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I. Arise, let us go hence."

Jesus the true Vine.

They arose; but Jesus, seeing their looks of apprehension, with His heart filled with love for them, continued to speak further words of consolation, and entered upon that beautiful discourse in which He compares Himself to a *vine*, His disciples to the *branches*, and His Father to the *husbandman*. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit,

My Father will take away; and every one that beareth fruit He will purge that it may bring forth more fruit. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If any-one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples.

"As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; as I have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you. I will not now call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you My friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. If the world hate you, know that it hated Me before you.* If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. But all these things they will do to you for My Name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not

* Can the servant expect better treatment than his master?

come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth Me, hateth My Father also. And if I had not done among you the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But that the word may be fulfilled which is written in their Law: *They have hated Me without cause.* But when the Paraclete shall come, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me.

Persecutions predicted.

"These things have I spoken to you that you may not be scandalised. They will put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he hath done a service to God. But these things I have told you, that when the hour of them shall come, you may remember that I told you.

The Paraclete.

"And now I go to Him that sent Me. But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Yet it is expedient for you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but, if I go, I will send Him to you. And when He shall come, He shall convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. He will teach you all truth, . . . and the things that are to come He will show you. A little while, and now you shall not see Me, and again a little while and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father."

Gladness after sorrow.

"What is this that He saith," the Apostles whispered among themselves—"'A little while and you shall not see Me; and again a little while and you shall see Me, and because I go to the Father?'" Jesus knew that they were desirous of questioning Him, and said to them: "You shall lament and weep,

but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." He then went on to speak of the joy that was to fill their souls after His resurrection, a joy that was to be ever unalterable and unremitting, because then He would give them assurances of their future resurrection and immortality: "Now indeed you have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you. . . . Amen, amen, I say to you: If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked anything in My Name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things I have spoken to you in proverbs. The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but will show you plainly of the Father. In that day you shall ask in My Name, and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and I go to the Father."

Jesus concludes His discourse.

His disciples said to Him: "Behold, now Thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we know that Thou knowest all things, and that for Thee it is not needful that any man ask Thee: in this we believe that Thou comest from God." Jesus answered them: "Do you now believe? Behold the hour cometh, and is now come, that you shall be dispersed, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world."

Then, with eyes lifted up towards heaven, He offered to His Heavenly Father a prayer which revealed the deepest

emotions of His soul: "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee; as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give life everlasting to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is life everlasting, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee upon the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

Christ's intercessory prayer.

And now regarding His disciples, He prayed for special graces for them in the discharge of their duties: "I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. Thine they were, and to Me Thou gavest them; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things which Thou hast given Me are from Thee; because the words which Thou gavest Me, I have given to them; and they have received them, and have known for certain that I came forth from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me; because they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We also are one. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy Name. Those that Thou gavest Me have I kept; and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture may be fulfilled. And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them,

Christ prays for His disciples.

because they are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world; and for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."

Christ prays for all who should believe in Him.

His prayer next extended to all those who were hereafter to believe in Him, and thus embraced the entire Church: "I pray not for them only, but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me, that they also may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them, that they may be one as We also are one,—I in them and Thou in Me;—that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me, that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me from the foundation of the world. Just Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. I have made known Thy Name to them, and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

Jesus crosses the brook Cedron.

When Jesus had finished speaking, and a hymn of thanksgiving had been sung, with His disciples He took the road that led to the first scene of His sufferings. Together they passed over the brook Cedron, which lies between Jerusalem and Mount Olivet, and entered the garden of Gethsemani.

PART VII

THE PASSION, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

A.D. 30

"Despised, and the most abject of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity. Surely He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; and we have thought Him, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our iniquities, and He was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all. He was offered because it was His own will, and He opened not His mouth: He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearer. . . . He was taken away from distress and from judgment: who shall declare His generation? because He is cut off out of the land of the living: for the wickedness of My people have I struck Him" (Isa. liii.).

CHAPTER XLVIII

JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANI

Matt. XXVI.; Mark XIV.; Luke XXII.; John XVIII.

"I will be mindful and remember, and My soul shall anguish within Me" (Lam. iii. 20).

"Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered" (Zach. xiii. 7).

"The breath of our mouth, Christ the Lord, is taken in our sins" (Lam. iv. 20).

The agony in the garden.

When they reached the garden of Gethsemani, whither He was accustomed to go with His disciples, Jesus directed the rest of the disciples to sit down, but took with Him Peter, James, and John, the three who had witnessed His Transfiguration,

and leaving them with the charge to watch, He went apart, about a stone's throw, into the dimmest corner of the garden. Then, as St. Jerome remarks, to convince the world of the truth and reality of His human nature, He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. So intense were the feelings of fear, sadness, and grief which seized His soul, that He moaned in anguish: "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death." Then falling flat on the ground, He prayed that, if it might be, the hour might pass from Him: "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee: if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me: but yet, not My will but Thine be done." Then, as though to seek comfort and consolation, He came to the three Apostles, His last earthly resource, but found them asleep. Addressing Himself to them, especially to Peter, He said: "What! Could you not watch one hour with Me? Watch ye and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." But failing to find consolation in His Apostles, He again withdrew apart and prayed: "Father, if this chalice may not pass from Me, but I must drink it, Thy will be done."

Again He came to His Apostles and again found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy; whereupon He went away the third time and prayed, using the same words. And being in an agony He prayed the longer; and His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground.

In this terrible conflict He was not altogether abandoned. As angels had come and ministered to Him after His fast in the wilderness, so now an angel, whom the Father had sent, appeared to Him, comforting and strengthening Him. Coming back once more to His Apostles, and finding them still sleeping, He aroused them with the startling words: "It is enough: the hour is come: rise, let us go: behold he is at hand that will betray Me."

The traitor's kiss. (The 15th of Nisan, after midnight.)

While He was yet speaking, behold Judas entered the garden, at the head of a great multitude of men armed with swords and clubs, and bearing lanterns and torches; for they had been sent by the chief priests to seize our Saviour. The traitor knew the garden well, because Jesus had often resorted thither with His disciples. That He whom they sought might not escape, Judas had given the rabble a sign by which they might know Him: "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He, hold Him fast." Accordingly, when he saw our Saviour, he went up to Him, and, saluting Him with the words, "Hail, Rabbi!" kissed Him. "Friend," asked Jesus, "whereunto art thou come? Dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"

The arrest of Jesus.

In the meantime, the mob drew near to lay hands on Jesus, who, knowing all that was to happen, went forward to meet them. "Whom seek you?" He asked. They answered: "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them: "I am He." That they might know that of their own power they could do nothing against Him, He had no sooner uttered these words than, as though thunder-struck, they recoiled, and fell to the ground. A second time He asked them whom they sought, and again receiving the same reply, He said: "I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these (My disciples) go their way." Then did He allow Himself to be seized.

Peter's zeal rebuked.

When Peter saw the mob lay violent hands on his Divine Master, he was fired with indignation, and drawing his sword, struck Malchus, one of the servants of the High Priest, and cut off his ear. Jesus calmly rebuked Peter, and bade him put back his sword into the scabbard, saying: "The chalice which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? Thinkest thou that I cannot ask My Father,

and He will give Me presently twelve legions of angels? How then shall the Scripture be fulfilled?" Saying this, He healed the ear of Malchus; and turning to the chief priests and elders, who were the leaders of the band, He reproached them, saying: "You are come out as it were with swords and clubs to apprehend Me. I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple, and you laid not hands on Me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Flight of the disciples.

When the disciples saw Jesus bound, they were overcome with fear, and, forsaking Him, took to flight. Peter, however, and another disciple, who is supposed to have been John, followed after at a safe distance. A certain young man, also, who had come up, attracted doubtless by the tumult, followed, clad merely as he was in a linen garment; and when the mob tried to seize him, he escaped into the darkness, leaving the linen cloth in the hands of his would-be captors.

Literally indeed were the words of the prophet Zacharias fulfilled: "Strike the Shepherd and the sheep shall be dispersed."

CHAPTER XLIX

JESUS BEFORE CAIPHAS AND THE SANHEDRIM

Matt. XXVI.; Mark XIV.; Luke XXII.; John XVIII.

"Unjust witnesses, rising up, have asked Me things I know not" (Ps. xxxiv. 11).

"I have given My body to the strikers, and My cheeks to them that plucked them: I have not turned away My face from them that rebuked Me, and spit upon Me" (Isa. l. 6).

"Cast it to the statuary, a handsome price, that I was prized at by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and I cast them into the house of the Lord, to the statuary" (Zach. xi. 13).

The 15th of Nisan: early hours of the morning.

Jesus was led bound first to the house of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiphas, who was the High Priest of that year. This was the same Caiphas who had counselled the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Jesus first sent to Annas.

Our Saviour seems to have been detained at the house of Annas but a short while before He was hurried on, still bound, to the palace of Caiphas. It is doubtful why, in the first instance, He was sent to Annas; but many are of opinion that the house of Annas lay on the way to that of Caiphas, or that they occupied separate wings of the same palace. Moreover, as Annas himself had for many years held the sacred office of High Priest previous to his deposition by the Romans, and was even at this time a man of great authority among the Jews, who regarded him as their legitimate High Priest, it seems natural that the Jews should have been desirous of gratifying their former High Priest by a sight of Jesus, now a prisoner and bound with ropes.

Arrived at the palace of Caiphas, Jesus was taken into an outer hall opening into the court, where He was detained pending the assembling of the Sanhedrim. In the mean-

time Caiphas examined our Saviour privately, not as His judge, but questioned Him concerning His doctrine and His disciples with a view to finding some heads of accusation from His answers. Throughout the examination Jesus was exposed to the ridicule and insults of the mocking soldiers. Later, however, we find Caiphas sitting in the quality of judge, examining the crimes laid to the charge of the Accused.

Jesus before Caiphas.

The entrance to the High Priest's palace was by a gate leading into an open quadrangle, in the middle of which a fire had been kindled against the chill of the night. Around the fire were grouped many of the servants and soldiers in attendance on the High Priest. Our Saviour had been led into one of the halls or chambers which opened into and commanded a view of the court, and from which could be seen what was passing without around the fire.

The palace of the High Priest.

Not only had Peter and John followed Jesus to the palace of Caiphas, but John, who was known to the High Priest, had ventured to enter, and obtained permission from the portress for Peter to enter also. Peter, believing himself secure from recognition, joined those who stood around the fire.

Peter and John follow Jesus.

While he was warming himself at the fire, the maid-servant who had let him in came up and asked: "Art thou not also one of this man's disciples?" Peter, who had boasted that very night that, although all the rest of the disciples should abandon their Master, he would never forsake Him, at the voice of a poor maid now denied Him, and exclaimed abruptly: "I am not one of His disciples. I know not what thou sayest." Alarmed and ashamed, he withdrew to the porch; and the cock crew.

Peter's first denial.

Meanwhile the High Priest continued questioning Jesus privately concerning His teaching. But Jesus answered him: "I have spoken openly to the world: I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple whither all the Jews resort; and in secret I have spoken nothing. Ask those who have heard what I have spoken unto them. Behold they know what things I have said." Thereupon one of the officers gave Jesus a blow and said: "Answerest Thou the High Priest so?" Jesus meekly replied: "If I have spoken ill, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou Me?"

Jesus struck by one of the soldiers.

It was soon after this that another maid recognised Peter, and said to the bystanders: "This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth." This time Peter exclaimed with an oath: "I do not know the Man!"

Peter's second denial.

How true it is that one fall draws on another, and generally a deeper! About an hour later, some of those who were standing about said to Peter: "Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilean; even thy speech doth discover thee"; while a servant of the High Priest, who was a kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off, added: "Did I not see thee with Him in the garden?" Upon this Peter began to curse and to swear that he knew not the Man. At that moment the cock crew; and at the same time Peter looked in the direction of the hall in which Jesus was waiting, with His arms still bound. Their eyes met. In an instant the warning of Jesus flashed across Peter's mind. "Before the cock crow twice, thou wilt deny Me thrice": and, filled with grief and remorse at beholding the sorrowful gaze of Jesus, he immediately went out and wept bitterly.

Peter's third denial.

In the early hours of the morning the Sanhedrim met, and Jesus was arraigned before them to undergo His official examination. The chief priests and the whole council were

resolved on having Him condemned as a false prophet and blasphemer; for then, by the Mosaic Law, He would merit death. To secure this end many false witnesses were called; yet their evidence was both inconsistent and contradictory. They tried to distort His utterances, but the testimony they brought forward against Him was not such as to prove Him guilty of a capital offence. Two years before, as we read in St. John (ii. 19), He had uttered these words: "Destroy this temple [*i.e.*, the temple of My body], and in three days I will raise it up." Having this saying in mind, two false witnesses at length came forward, who, by wilfully distorting His words, drew from them a sense they were never meant to convey, and thus made a plausible accusation against Him. They affirmed: "This man said: *I am able to destroy* the Temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it." To all this Jesus made no reply, for He knew that whatever He said He would be condemned. Then the High Priest rose up and asked: "Answerest Thou nothing to the things which these witness against Thee?" Jesus, however, continued to hold His peace.

First hearing before the Sanhedrim.

But the more He was silent in regard to what was alleged against Him, the more did the High Priest try to extort an answer from Him, and make Him appear guilty by His own confession. Still Jesus uttered not a word. Then, filled with vexation, the High Priest rose up and exclaimed: "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Accordingly, moved by the solemn invocation of God's Name, which, according to the Law, obliged Him to answer, Jesus replied: "I am. And hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Till now Jesus had presented Himself before them as a Redeemer: hence-

forth He should sit as a Judge on the right hand of God, and as a Judge should one day return.

With a mock display of righteous indignation, the High Priest rent his garments, exclaiming: "He hath blasphemed: what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy: what think you?" With one voice they declared Him guilty of death. At this point the council of the Sanhedrim broke up to meet again at early dawn.

Jesus maltreated by the rabble.

Our Blessed Saviour, in the meantime, was abandoned to the affronts of the soldiers and a miscreant throng, who began to insult and abuse Him in the most barbarous manner their diabolical malice could invent. Having blindfolded Him, they spat in His face, and buffeted Him; while many struck Him in the face with the palms of their hands, calling to Him in derision: "Prophesy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck Thee?" and many uttered the most horrible blasphemies against Him. This treatment was continued throughout the night, till, at daybreak, the Sanhedrim met for a second hearing.

Second hearing before the Sanhedrim (the 15th of Nisan, at dawn).

In the morning, the chief priests, together with the ancients and the scribes, took counsel how they might induce the Roman Governor to put Jesus to death. This time they called no witnesses, but when our Lord was brought before them, they commanded Him: "If Thou be the Christ, tell us." He answered: "If I tell you, you will not believe Me. . . . But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God." Then said they all: "Art Thou the Son of God?" to which He answered: "You say that I am." "What need we any further testimony?" they exclaimed, "for we ourselves have heard it from His own mouth."

It was customary with the Jews to bind and deliver over

to the Roman Governor those whom they had condemned in their own councils. Thus, then, was our Lord conducted to the court of Pilate that He might be put to death; for, under the Romans, the Sanhedrim had power to condemn to death, but not to put that sentence into execution.

Despair and death of Judas.

When Judas saw that Jesus was delivered up to Pilate, he was tortured with remorse at the thought of his own atrocious wickedness; yet his grief was unavailing, conjoined as it was with the blackest despair. He carried back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests, and cried out: "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they said. "Look thou to it." Thereupon he threw down the money in the Temple, and went and hanged himself with a halter; having by transgression fallen from his Apostleship, says St. Peter, that he might go to his own place. But the chief priests said: "It is not lawful to put the money into the Corbona,* because it is the price of blood." After consulting together, they decided to buy the potter's field with it, as a burial-place for strangers, thereby carrying out to the very letter the words of the prophet: "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was prized, whom they prized of the children of Israel: and they gave them unto the potter's field, as the Lord appointed to me."

* *I.e.*, the treasury, the place in the Temple into which the people put their offerings.

CHAPTER L

CIVIL TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

Matt. XXVII.; Mark XV.; Luke XXIII.; John XVIII.

"They have opened their mouths against Me, as a lion ravening and roaring" (Ps. xxi. 14).

"For many dogs have encompassed Me: the council of the malignant hath besieged Me" (Ps. xxi. 17).

"From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head there is no soundness therein: wounds and bruises and swelling sores" (Isa. i. 6).

Why Jesus was brought before Pilate.

Jesus had been brought before Pontius Pilate by the Sanhedrim, because, as we have already seen the power of life and death being taken from them, they durst not exercise it without the permission of the Roman Governor. Moreover, one condemned for blasphemy would have had to be led out of the city, and, according to the Mosaic Law, stoned to death: whereas, if Jesus were put to death with the consent of the Roman authorities, He would have to die a more infamous death on the cross. Owing, moreover, to the state of popular feeling at this time, and desirous of throwing the odium of their proposed action on another, they refrained from taking the responsibility of His death upon themselves, and thus venturing to offend the Roman Governor, whose support they needed in case of a rising among the people.

Charge of sedition.

Jesus was conducted to the Praetorium, where Pilate had thus early taken his seat; but the Jews would not go into the court lest, by incurring defilement, they should be prevented from taking part in the Paschal celebration. Pilate, however, condescended to come out to them, and asked what accusation they brought against Jesus. Replying at first in

general terms, they answered: "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to thee." But when Pilate gave them permission to judge Him by their own law, they answered: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." It was necessary that the words of Jesus, wherein He foretold by what manner of death He was to die, should be fulfilled: "They shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him up to the Gentiles to be mocked and to be scourged and to be crucified" (Matt. xx. 18, 19). Asked by Pilate to adduce the chief points of their accusation, the Jews charged our Saviour with purely political crimes, namely, with raising tumults, forbidding tribute to be paid to Caesar, and calling Himself Christ, the King. "We have found this man perverting our nation," they said, "and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that He is Christ, the King." But they omitted to mention the real cause why they wished to put Him to death—viz., that He had assumed the title of the Son of God.

Jesus questioned by Pilate.

Hereupon Pilate went back into the Praetorium, and, calling Jesus before him, asked Him if He were indeed the King of the Jews. Jesus owned that He was, but inquired of Pilate if he asked this of himself or at the suggestion of others. Pilate replied: "Am I a Jew? Thy own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee up to me: what hast Thou done?" Jesus answered: "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews." "Art Thou a King, then?" asked Pilate. Jesus answered: "Thou sayest that I am a King. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth." Pilate asked: "What is truth?" but, without waiting for an answer, he

went out, and told the Jews that he found no cause in Him.

Fearing that Pilate was about to set our Saviour free, the Jews grew more earnest in their accusations, and declared that throughout all Judaea, from Galilee to Jerusalem, Jesus had stirred up the people. To these charges Jesus made no reply, so that Pilate wondered at His patience and silence, and asked: "Dost Thou not hear how great testimonies they allege against Thee?" But Jesus held His peace as before.

Jesus sent to Herod.

Hearing that He was of Galilee, Pilate seized the chance of extricating himself from the importunities of the Jewish priests, and sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, who, being a Jew, was in Jerusalem for the Festival. Herod had heard much of Jesus, and was delighted to have Him brought to him, for he hoped that He would satisfy his curiosity by working a miracle in his presence. But Jesus replied not a word to any of his questions. Disappointed and enraged, and moved, too, by the clamours of the Jews who stood by vehemently accusing Jesus, Herod and his army made a mockery of Him. They had Him clothed in a white garment, and in scorn and derision sent Him as a mock King through the streets of Jerusalem back again to Pilate. Now, up to this time a feeling of enmity had existed between Herod and Pilate, but on this day they became friends; and the words of the royal prophet were fulfilled: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together against the Lord, and against His Christ."

Pilate wishes to set Jesus free.

Pilate soon saw that it was through envy that the Jews brought their accusations against Jesus, and tried every expedient to have Him set free. "You have presented unto me this Man," he said, "as one that perverteth the people, and behold I, having examined Him, find no cause in those things

wherein you accuse Him. No, neither does Herod; for I sent you to him, and behold nothing worthy of death is done to Him." Herod, indeed, had not treated Him as a criminal; he had only derided Him as a fool.

Jesus and Barabbas.

At last Pilate thought he had found out a way of delivering Jesus. At the time of the Passover, it was a custom for the Governor to release to the people any one criminal whose life they should petition for. To induce them to beg for Jesus, Pilate put Him in comparison with Barabbas, a famous malefactor and notorious murderer, and proposed to release to them which of the two they might choose, Jesus or Barabbas.

Let Him be crucified.

While he awaited their decision, there arrived a message from his wife bidding him have nothing to do with Jesus, "that just Man," as she called Him; for in her dreams she had been much troubled concerning Him. Whilst he was listening to his wife's messenger, the chief priests and the elders had gone among the people instructing them to demand the release of Barabbas, and to have Jesus put to death. When, therefore, there came again Pilate's question: "Which of the two shall I release to you?" with a loud cry came the answer: "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" Pilate asked: "What then shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" With one voice they exclaimed: "Let Him be crucified!" "Why," asked Pilate, "what evil hath He done? I find no cause in Him. I will chastise Him, therefore, and let Him go." But they clamoured the more vehemently: "Let Him be crucified!"

Jesus is scourged and crowned with thorns.

Seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that there threatened to be a tumult, Pilate took water and washed his hands before the people, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just Man: look you to it." Calling down this terrible curse upon their own heads, the people answered: "His

blood be upon us and upon our children." Pilate then set Barabbas free, and handed Jesus over to the brutal soldiers. They conducted Him into the praetor's court to scourge Him before leading Him forth to execution, a punishment ordained by Roman law to be inflicted on one condemned to the cross. The whole band of soldiers having been called together, they stripped Jesus, and fastening Him by the wrists to a low pillar, cruelly scourged Him. Afterwards they platted a crown of sharp thorns, and pressed it violently upon His sacred head. To complete the outward appearance of a mock King they even clothed Him in a purple garment, put a reed in His hand for a sceptre, and, bowing the knee before Him in derision, saluted Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They then smote Him on the face, spat upon Him, and struck His head with the reed, thus adding to the cruel torture already inflicted on it by the crown of thorns.

"Ecce homo!"

After the soldiers had thus cruelly treated our Saviour, Pilate, seeing the abject state to which He had been reduced, and thinking that the sight of the patient Sufferer might move the better feelings of the people, presented Him in this condition to the people, with the words: "Behold the Man!" He had hoped that their fury would be changed to pity, but they cried out the more violently: "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" "Take Him you," said Pilate, "and crucify Him; for I find no cause in Him."

The spiritual charge renewed.

The Jews, seeing that the political charge was of no avail, reverted again to the spiritual accusation urged against Him before the Sanhedrim: "We have a law; and according to the law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." Still afraid to yield, Pilate took Jesus back again with him into the hall, determined to make a personal inquiry into this charge also. He therefore said to Jesus:

"Whence art Thou?" But Jesus answered not a word. "Speakest Thou not to me?" continued Pilate. "Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and I have power to release Thee?" Jesus then answered: "Thou shouldst not have any power against Me unless it were given thee from above. Therefore he that delivereth Me to thee hath the greater sin."

Jesus is condemned to death.

Pilate, more convinced than ever of the innocence of Jesus, was still desirous of setting Him at liberty; but when the Jews perceived this, they told him plainly that if he released Him he was no friend of Caesar. These words had more effect on Pilate than anything previously alleged, and prevailed with him both against justice and his own conscience to condemn the innocent Jesus. He feared lest some private information might be presented against him to the Emperor Tiberius of his having acquitted a usurper, and that he would thus lose the Emperor's favour. Mounting the judgment-seat in the place that is called Lithostrotos, and in Hebrew Gabbatha, he said to the Jews: "Behold your King!" But they cried out: "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" "Shall I crucify your King?" asked Pilate. The chief priests answered: "We have no king but Caesar." At this Pilate yielded; and Jesus, whom he had so often declared innocent, he delivered unto them to be crucified. It was through envy that Christ had been delivered into the power of Pilate, and it was through fear that Pilate exercised that power.

CHAPTER LI

THE WAY OF THE CROSS—THE CRUCIFIXION

Matt. XXVII.; Mark XV.; Luke XXIII.; John XIX.

"They gave Me gall for My food, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink" (Ps. lxviii. 22).

"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Ps. xxi. 2).

"They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced" (Zach. xii. 10).

"They have dug My hands and feet, they have numbered all My bones. And they have looked and stared upon Me. They parted My garments amongst them, and upon My vesture they cast lots" (Ps. xxi. 17-19).

Jesus is led away to be crucified. (The 15th of Nisan, about 9 a.m.)

Now began that painful journey from the city to the place of execution. After the cruel soldiers had torn the purple cloak from our Saviour's shoulders, and clothed Him once more in His own garment, they led Him, with the cross on His shoulders, through the streets of the city, and out by the gate which led to the hill of Calvary or Golgotha, the Place of Skulls, the spot set apart for public executions. But the strength of Jesus was well-nigh exhausted by the barbarous cruelties to which He had been exposed for so many hours; and on leaving the city, the soldiers, seeing that He was almost unable to move along, and was sinking beneath the weight of His burden, laid hold of a man of Cyrene, named Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, and forced him to carry the cross after Jesus to Calvary.

The women of Jerusalem weep for Jesus.

A great crowd followed, and among them many women, weeping and lamenting; but Jesus turned to the women and said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but for yourselves and your children; for behold the days shall come wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that

have not borne, and the breasts that have not given suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us. For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?" He would have them weep for the troubles that were so soon to befall their unhappy country, when so many of their sons and daughters were to perish miserably through fire and sword.

To complete the ignominy of Jesus, two malefactors were led out with Him to death, thus verifying the words of Isaias: "And He was reputed with the wicked" (liii. 12).

Jesus is nailed to the cross.

When they were come to the place of execution, Jesus was offered a draught of wine mingled with gall; but after He had tasted, He would not drink. He was then stripped of His clothes, stretched on the cross, and nailed by His hands and feet to the hard wood. The cross with its precious burden was then raised and dropped with a thud into the hole prepared to receive it, thus sending a thrill of the most agonising pain through the racked frame of our dear Redeemer. And there, in fearful agony, the Saviour of mankind hung suspended for three hours, bleeding and dying between two malefactors, and spent with suffering, all for the love of sinful man.

The first of the dying words of Jesus.

Whilst there hanging on the cross Jesus prayed for His murderers: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This was the first of those seven utterances which we speak of as the last words of our dying Saviour.

On the cross, immediately above His head, Pilate had caused to be put this inscription in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The chief priests were dissatisfied with the wording of the inscription, and requested Pilate to alter it to read thus:

"He said I am the King of the Jews." But Pilate turned a deaf ear to their request, and merely answered: "What I have written I have written." As St. John tells us, it was the Parasceve of the Pasch, or the day of preparation for the great and solemn Paschal Sabbath, about the sixth hour,* when they crucified Him.

The cross was watched by a guard of four soldiers, under the command of a centurion, who now proceeded to divide the clothes of our Saviour among them. After four parts had been made, there yet remained His seamless coat, for which they cast lots, that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "They divided My garments among them, and upon My vesture they cast lots" (Ps. xxi. 19).

Jesus insulted on the cross. The second of His dying words.

As Jesus hung upon the cross, He was exposed to the scoffs of the mocking crowd. Many, doubtless, of those who, only a few days before, had welcomed Him with cries of hosanna, now, owing to His changed condition, blasphemed Him, wagged their heads at Him, and scornfully exclaimed: "Vah! Thou who destroyest the Temple of God and in three days buildest it up again, save Thy own Self. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." In like manner, also, the chief priests and the elders taunted Him, and in contempt cried out: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save: if He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusted in God: let Him now deliver Him if He will have Him; for He said: I am the Son of God." Even one of the two criminals that were crucified with Him joined in deriding and blaspheming Him, saying: "If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself

* St. Mark calls it the *third* hour, because the third great hour (which contained three lesser hours) did not end till midday, when the *sixth* hour was beginning; so that the end of the third and the beginning of the sixth happened together.

and us." But the other, when he contrasted his own wicked life with the innocence of our dying Saviour, rebuked his fellow-criminal, and said: "Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done no evil." Then, turning his eyes on Jesus, he continued: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Jesus was pleased with the faith and humble confession of the penitent thief, and, bending on him a look of tender mercy, replied: "Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise."

The third of the dying words of Jesus.

Among those who stood around the cross of Jesus were Mary His mother, His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, Mary Magdalene, and the beloved disciple St. John. Turning on His mother and the beloved disciple a look of love, Jesus, in that hour of inexpressible anguish, exclaimed: "Woman, behold thy son. Son, behold thy mother." And from that hour the disciple regarded Mary as his own mother.

The fourth of the dying words of Jesus.

Although it was midday and the time of the full moon, when an eclipse of the sun would be impossible, there was darkness over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hour—*i.e.*, from twelve o'clock till three o'clock—a supernatural darkness sent, as it were, to shroud the agonies of the world's Redeemer. For a long while Jesus hung in silence on the cross; but, about the ninth hour, His awful abandonment wrung from Him the anguishing cry, expressive of His violent sufferings: "Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabacthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Hearing these words, some of those who stood by cried out: "Behold, He calleth Elias."

Knowing that all things were now accomplished, that

the Scriptures might be fulfilled, Jesus said: "I thirst."

The fifth of th dying words of Jesus.

Thereupon one of the soldiers, taking a sponge and filling it with vinegar, put it on a reed and raised it to His lips, while the others said: "Let us see if Elias will come to deliver Him."

When Jesus had taken the vinegar, He said: "It is consummated." Of a truth, the work of Redemption, all the prophecies relating to His mortal life and Passion, and the decrees of Heaven concerning the Saviour of the world, were now accomplished. This was His dying farewell to earth.

The sixth of the dying words of Jesus.

It was now the very hour of the evening sacrifice, when Jesus, after hanging on the cross for three hours, and being in the agony of death, with a loud voice cried out: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Having said this, He bowed His head and died.

The seventh and last of the dying words of Jesus.

At the same hour the veil of the Temple, which hung between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, was rent in two from the top to the bottom; the earth quaked, the rocks were split asunder, the graves were opened, and numbers of the saints arose and were seen by many in Jerusalem after His resurrection.*

The veil of the Temple rent in two.

Seeing the wonders that were being wrought around him, and struck by the vigour of the dying exclamation of Jesus, which he considered as an effect of Divine rather than of human power, the Roman centurion was filled with awe, and confessed aloud: "Indeed this Man was the Son of God."

Confession of the Roman centurion.

* Observing the convulsions of Nature which paid homage, as it were, to its God expiring on the cross, and not knowing the cause, Dionysius, the Areopagite, who was then at Heliopolis, a city of Egypt, and who was afterwards converted by St. Paul, is said to have exclaimed: "Either the universe is falling to ruin, or the God of Nature must be suffering."

The multitude, too, that had come together to see what was done were struck with fear, and returned striking their breasts. Many of the holy women who had followed Jesus from Galilee—among them being Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of James the Less and Joseph; and Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee—and many also who had accompanied Him from Jerusalem, stood apart, gazing in silence upon Him whom they had loved so dearly.

As the Sabbath would begin at sunset, and as the Jews did not wish the bodies to remain on the cross on the Sabbath-day, they begged Pilate to allow them to be taken down and buried. He readily granted their request, and sent soldiers for this purpose.

The side of Jesus pierced with a lance.

Seeing that the two thieves were still alive, the soldiers ended their sufferings by breaking their legs. When, however, they came to Jesus, and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs, but one of them took a spear and opened His side with such a wound as would have deprived Him of life; and immediately there issued from the wound blood mingled with water. These things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. "You shall not break a bone of Him" (Exod. xii. 46)—words spoken of the Paschal lamb, and applied by the Evangelist to Christ, of whom the Paschal lamb was a figure. And again it is written: "They shall look on Him whom they pierced" (Zach. xii. 10). To impress on us the reality of Christ's death, and hence the genuineness of His resurrection, St. John, as an eyewitness, goes on to say: "And he that saw it gave testimony; and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true that you also may believe."

Meanwhile, Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and, in private, a disciple of Jesus, who had opposed the San-

hedrim in their condemnation of Him, came to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate expressed wonder that He was already dead, but having satisfied himself of the truth from the centurion, he granted Joseph's request. Nicodemus also, a ruler of the Jews, came to help to bury our Saviour, bringing with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes with which to embalm the body. They took down His body from the cross, and, wrapping it in a fine linen cloth, together with the spices, laid it in the new monument which Joseph had hewn for himself out of the rock in a garden near the place of crucifixion. After laying the body reverently in the tomb, they rolled a large stone against the entrance, that no man might go in or take the body away.

Jesus taken down from the cross and laid in the sepulchre.

Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joseph, and other women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee, observed where they laid the body, as it was their intention to come after the Sabbath was over for the purpose of again embalming it. They withdrew to prepare their spices and ointments, but on the Sabbath-day, which began at sunset, they rested according to the commandment.

Next day, on the morning of the great Paschal Sabbath, the chief priests and the Pharisees came to Pilate for permission to set a guard over the tomb, on the pretext that the disciples might steal the body and say that Jesus had risen from the dead. "Sir," they urged, "this seducer said: After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, the sepulchre to be guarded till the third day." "You have a guard," Pilate answered: "go, guard it as you know." This they did, and took the further precaution of affixing a seal to the stone which had been rolled to the entrance. Providence ordained this precaution to place the reality of Christ's resurrection beyond a doubt. The chief motive

The tomb is sealed (Easter Eve).

which influenced the chief priests and the scribes on this occasion was probably the apprehension lest the prediction of Christ's resurrection should be verified. They remembered He had promised them one sign—that of Jonas the Prophet.

CHAPTER LII

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR SAVIOUR — THE EVENTS OF THE FIRST EASTER DAY

Matt. XXVIII.; Mark XVI.; Luke XXIV.; John XX.

"Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; nor wilt thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. xv. 10).

Easter Sunday.

EARLY in the morning of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other pious women, among whom were Mary the mother of James, and Salome, and Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, set out for the sepulchre in order to complete the embalmment of the body of our Lord.

The holy women come to the tomb.

As they went along, they asked one another who would roll back the stone from the entrance to the tomb, for it was very great. But when they reached the tomb, they were surprised to find the stone removed, for "behold there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow; and for fear of him, the guards were struck with terror, and became as dead men."

Mary Magdalene calls Peter and John.

While her companions remained at the tomb, Mary Magdalene hurried back to the city to carry the news to Peter and John: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him." But the

other women entered the tomb, and were struck with astonishment to see, sitting on the right side, an angel in the appearance of a young man clad in a white robe, who said to them: "Fear not; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here: He is risen: behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there you shall see Him as He told you." With mingled feelings of fear and joy, they hastened away to fulfil their commission.

Peter and John run to the sepulchre.

In the meantime, Peter and John had set out for the tomb, followed by Mary Magdalene. In their eagerness to see for themselves what Mary had announced to them, the two Apostles, as they drew near to the sepulchre, began to run, but John, running more quickly, arrived at the tomb first. Stooping down, he looked in and saw the linen cloths lying by themselves, but hesitated to enter. When Peter came up, he went into the sepulchre, and noticed not only the linen cloths, but the napkin that had been wrapped about the head of our Lord lying folded apart. John then went in, saw this also, and believed: "For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." The two then returned home.

First appearance of Jesus on Easter Sunday. He appears to Mary Magdalene.

But Mary Magdalene remained behind, and stood in front of the sepulchre weeping. Stooping down and peering into the tomb, she saw two angels in white, sitting where had rested the head and feet of Jesus. To their inquiry why she wept, she answered: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." She then turned round, and saw standing before her a Man whom she knew not, but whom she took to be the gardener. "Woman," He asked, "why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" "Sir," she answered "if Thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where Thou hast

laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus, for He it was, said to her: "Mary!" She instantly recognised the loved voice, and exclaimed in a transport of joy: "Rabboni!" that is to say, "Master!" Jesus said to her: "Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren, and tell them that I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God." Mary returned and told the disciples what she had seen; but when they had heard her story they did not believe it.

Second appearance of Jesus. He appears to the holy women.

When the other women were returning from the sepulchre to carry the tidings to the disciples, they were met by Jesus Himself, who bade them, "All hail!" They knew His voice, and fell down and worshipped Him. He told them to fear not, and Himself confirmed the message of the angel: "Go, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, where they shall see Me."

The report of the guards.

After the guards had recovered from their overwhelming fright, some of them went into the city, and related to the chief priests all that they had seen. The chief priests, after taking counsel with the ancients, bribed them to say that while they were asleep the disciples had come and stolen the body of Jesus. They gave them a great sum of money to spread this story in the city, and promised to save them from the anger of Pilate if word of this reached his ears.

Could anything be more trivial than to bring in as witnesses of a fact men who own that it was done while they were asleep?

Third appearance of Jesus. He appears to St. Peter.

The third appearance of our Lord on Easter Day seems to have been to St. Peter, as we gather from St. Luke: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (xxiv. 34); and again from St. Paul in his First Epistle to the

Corinthians: "He was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven" (xv. 5).

Fourth appearance of Jesus. He appears to two disciples at Emmaus.

In the afternoon of the same day two of our Lord's disciples were going to Emmaus, a town situated some two hours' walk to the north-west of Jerusalem, and as they went along they spoke of what had taken place in Jerusalem during the last few days. Whilst thus engaged, Jesus, whom they regarded as a traveller like themselves, came up and joined them. He inquired of them what was the subject of their discourse, and why they were so sad. One of them, whose name was Cleophas, asked in astonishment: "Art Thou alone a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days?" On His asking "What things?" they answered: "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in work and word before God and all the people; and how our chief priests and rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we hoped that it was He who should have redeemed Israel: and now, besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company affrighted us, who, before it was light, were at the sepulchre; and, not finding His body, came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that He is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but Him they found not." Jesus said to them: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the Prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?" He then began to explain to them the different passages from Scripture that Moses and the Prophets had written concerning Him.

When they reached Emmaus He seemed about to go on, but they urged Him to stay with them, as the day

was already far spent. He yielded to their request, and whilst He was at table with them He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. By this action, in which the Fathers believe our Saviour to have administered the Blessed Sacrament to the two disciples, their eyes were immediately opened; but no sooner had they recognised who He was than He vanished from their sight.

Filled with astonishment, they said to each other: "Was not our heart burning within us whilst He spoke in the way and opened to us the Scriptures?" That same hour they rose up and hastened back to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven* Apostles with some of the disciples gathered together, and told them what had occurred on the way, and how they had known Jesus in the breaking of bread. Yet, although they themselves were welcomed with the news, "The Lord indeed hath risen, and hath appeared to Simon," their own account of what they had witnessed was received with doubt.

Fifth appearance of Jesus. He appears to the assembled Apostles, except Thomas.

That same day, however, when it was late, while with mingled feelings of doubt and expectation the Apostles were met together with closed doors for fear of the Jews, Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst, and greeted them with the words, "Peace be to you." Believing it was a spirit they saw, they were affrighted and troubled till Jesus allayed their fears by asking: "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" To convince them that He was not a spirit, He continued: "See My

* If the apparition which follows was made when St. Thomas was not with the Apostles, there must have been only ten of them. But the Evangelist here perhaps calls them the *Eleven*, because the Apostolic College contained at that time but eleven members. Or again it may have been that Thomas was present with the others when the two disciples returned from Emmaus, but had gone out immediately afterwards, and was absent when Jesus appeared before the other ten.

hands and feet that it is I Myself: handle, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands, His feet, and His side. All were filled with wonder and joy. That every shadow of doubt might be removed from their minds, He asked them if they had anything to eat; and when they offered Him a piece of broiled fish and a honeycomb, He ate with them. Again He said to them: "Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." He then breathed on them, and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven."

As on a former occasion, before giving His Apostles permission to preach and baptise, Jesus had first of all declared the grounds of His right to send them, so, likewise, on this occasion did He proclaim His commission before giving them the power to remit sins, a power denied by heretics, but clearly contained in the words just mentioned. Already at the Last Supper He had given them power to change bread and wine into His own most precious Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist; now, by this additional power of binding and loosing which He here conferred upon them, He completed their priestly character.

Thomas is incredulous.

One of their number, Thomas, surnamed Didymus, was not with them at this time; and when he was told by the others that they had seen the Lord, he refused to believe their declaration, and said: "Except I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

The Apostles waited in Jerusalem for more than another week longer, that is, till the Feast was over, before obeying

the command conveyed to them by the devout women to repair into Galilee. It was not to the Apostles only, but to all His disciples, that our Lord referred when He said that they should see Him in Galilee. Even the mountain on which the reunion was to take place was indicated; but what mountain it was we know not.

During the forty days, from His Resurrection till His Ascension, our Lord frequently appeared to His Apostles, at times to all of them at once, and at times only to some of them. Though the sacred writers relate but *ten** different manifestations, we must remember that they only recorded those needful to establish the great facts of His Resurrection, and of His commission to His Apostles. During these manifestations He taught them to understand the Holy Scriptures, and instructed them in the nature and the use of those spiritual powers which He had imparted to them, and in everything that pertained to their sacred ministry. He gave them power to forgive sins; He sent them as His heavenly Father had sent Him; He gave to St. Peter the charge over His whole flock; He promised to send down upon them the Holy Ghost, and to remain with them—*i.e.*, with His Church—to the end of the world.

* Of the *ten* different manifestations of our Saviour enumerated by the sacred writers we find that *five* are assigned to the day of His Resurrection, viz.:

1. To Mary Magdalene, in the garden near the sepulchre.
2. To the devout women on their returning from the sepulchre.
3. To St. Peter.
4. To the two disciples on the way to Emmaus.
5. To the assembled Apostles, except Thomas.

Between the day of His Resurrection and that of His Ascension, five separate manifestations are recorded:

1. After eight days, to the Eleven, Thomas being present.
2. To the seven Apostles by the Sea of Galilee.
3. On a mountain in Galilee to the great body of His disciples.
4. To St. James the Less, mentioned by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 7).
5. On the day of His Ascension, in Jerusalem, and at Mount Olivet when He was taken from them.

CHAPTER LIII

FURTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES—HIS COMMISSION TO ST. PETER —THE ASCENSION

Matt. XXVIII.; Mark XVI.; Luke XXIV.; John XX., XXI.; Acts I.

"The chariot of God is attended by ten thousands; thousands of them that rejoice: the Lord is among them in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts in men" (Ps. lxvii. 18, 19).

"Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates; and the King of Glory shall enter. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory" (Ps. xxiii. 7, 8).

Sixth appearance of Jesus. He appears to the eleven.

EIGHT days later—that is, on the Sunday following Easter Sunday—the Apostles were again assembled together, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were shut as before, when, of a sudden, Jesus appeared in the midst of them, and repeated the same salutation: "Peace be to you." And to show them that He knew all things, He turned to Thomas, and made use of the very words in which the latter had expressed his incredulity: "Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands, and bring hither thy hand and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing." Taught by the evidence of his senses, St. Thomas not only expressed his belief in the Resurrection, but made an act of faith in the Divinity of our Saviour: "My Lord and my God." Jesus said to him: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."

When the Feast of the Passover was ended, and the strangers who had come from distant lands to celebrate it had dispersed, the disciples of our Lord returned to

Galilee, there to await the fulfilment of the promise: "Behold, He will go before you into Galilee: there you shall see Him" (Matt. xxviii. 7).

Seventh appearance of Jesus. He appears to seven of the Apostles.

On one occasion seven of the Apostles—Peter, Thomas, Nathanael (Bartholomew), James, and John, and two others whose names are not mentioned — had spent the night fishing in the Sea of Galilee, but had taken nothing. At dawn, as they were still dragging their nets a short distance from the shore, they saw Jesus standing on the margin of the sea, but they did not recognise Him. He called to them, and asked them if they had any food; and on their replying that they had not, He bade them cast their net on the right side of the ship. They obeyed; and so great was the number of fishes they netted that they could not haul them in. By this John recognised who the Stranger was, and said to Peter: "It is the Lord." In his ardent desire to be with Jesus, Peter at once girded his garments about him, plunged into the sea, and swam ashore. The other disciples brought the ship to land, slowly dragging with them the heavily laden net, which, when drawn ashore, was found to contain a hundred and fifty-three large fishes, and yet was not broken. As soon as they came to land, they saw a fire prepared with a fish on its hot embers, besides a quantity of bread. Jesus invited them to come and eat; and no one asked Him who He was, for they were convinced that it was indeed the Lord.

Jesus' commission to St. Peter.

When the meal was over, Jesus turned to Peter and asked him: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?" "Yea, Lord," Peter answered, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus said to him: "Feed My lambs."

A second time He asked: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" "Yea, Lord," again Peter answered, "Thou

knowest that I love Thee." Jesus said to him: "Feed My lambs."

For the third time Jesus repeated the question: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" Peter, who doubtless, by being required to make a triple avowal of his love, was reminded of his threefold denial of our Saviour, answered modestly, and with great emotion: "Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus said to him: "Feed My sheep. Amen, amen, I say to thee, when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee where thou wouldst not." This He said, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God —that is, that a cross should be the instrument of his martyrdom. He then added: "Follow Me." Seeing John near, Peter said to Jesus: "Lord, what shall this man do?" Jesus answered: "So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? Follow thou Me."

When Christ told St. Peter to follow Him, it is generally believed that He meant that he should go, like Himself, to the death of the cross, but that in His words to St. John He would insinuate that the beloved disciple was not to undergo a violent death, but was to remain in the world till He should visit him by death and conduct him to his heavenly reward.* St. John continues: "This is that disciple who giveth testimony of these things, and hath written these things, and we know that his testimony is true."

In His commission to St. Peter to feed—*i.e.*, to guide,

* Some gather from the words of our Saviour in reference to St. John that the latter was not to die before seeing the coming of the Son of Man to manifest His power in the destruction of Jerusalem, an epoch which St. John alone, of all the Apostles, is believed to have survived.

rule, and govern—His lambs and His sheep, Christ made him the shepherd of the whole flock; not only of the lambs, by which is meant the people, but of those placed over them—of the sheep, the Bishops and priests of His Church. Here He fulfilled to him the promise He had already given of making him the head of His whole Church: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18, 19). Christ thus made St. Peter the infallible teacher, the judge from whom there is no appeal, the supreme visible head of His Church. He gave him power not only to teach, but to command submission to his teaching; power also to decide what one must do when there is a doubt about duty; and power as a ruler to make laws.

"Feed My lambs: feed My sheep."

After this, the Eleven, according to St. Matthew, went to the mountain in Galilee, where Jesus had appointed them to go. "And seeing Him, they adored; but some doubted." Now this last statement could hardly apply to any of the Eleven after what had occurred at the sixth appearance of our Lord to all the Apostles when Thomas was present. Hence, although St. Matthew merely mentions the Eleven, as they were the ones especially appointed to be the witnesses of His doctrine and miracles, particularly of His Resurrection, it is generally believed that it is to this apparition that St. Paul refers when he says: "Then He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6); and so the words *some doubted* need not be understood of the Apostles, but were used of others who had not hitherto seen Christ after His Resurrection. To confirm this idea, we have the words of the angel to the devout women on the morning of the Resurrection:

Eighth appearance of Jesus. He appears to the great body of the disciples.

"Behold, He will go before you into Galilee: there you shall see Him"—the great interview to which His disciples and the devout women, and not the Apostles only, were summoned from the moment of His Resurrection.

Jesus' commission to His Apostles.

When they were thus assembled, Jesus appeared before them, and gave His Apostles and their successors in the ministry, as His vicars, the great commission to carry His Gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth: "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in My name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents: and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover."

Had Jesus only said, "Behold I am with *you* all days," His remaining with them might, in that case, have been supposed to be limited to the natural lives of the Apostles; but as He added, "even to the consummation of the world," it must necessarily be extended to His successors in the ministry to the end of time.

By the words *go*, *teach*, He gave them the power of teaching not only what relates to faith, but also what is necessarily connected with piety and a holy life; for that only is true faith which does not contradict in work what is believed in the mind. Hence we see added the further explanation *teaching them to observe all things*

whatsoever I have commanded you, which words, beyond all doubt, must be referred to the precepts of a holy life. In these promises of our Lord to be with His Apostles all days, we see clearly bestowed the infallibility and the indefectibility of the one, holy, catholic, Apostolic Church which all are commanded to hear and obey.

Ninth appearance of Jesus. He appears to St. James.

After mentioning our Lord's appearance to more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom he says "many remain at present, and some are fallen asleep," St. Paul goes on to say: "After that He was seen by James, then by all the Apostles."

Tenth appearance of Jesus, on Ascension Day.

On the fortieth day after Christ's Resurrection we find His Apostles assembled at Jerusalem, where He appeared to them for the last time before His Ascension, and commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but there to wait for the fulfilment of the promises of the Father, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence. And He added: "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me." Then He instilled into them a new light by opening their minds to understand the Scriptures. "Thus it is written," He said, "and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day; and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* And you are witnesses of these things. And I send the promise of My Father upon you: but stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high." They therefore asked Him:

* The sense is, that they were first to preach to the Jews and afterwards to the Gentiles.

"Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" "It is not for you," He answered, "to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in His own power. But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 6-9).

The Ascension.

He then led them forth over the Mount of Olives towards Bethany, over the ground so recently trodden by Him when on His way to Jerusalem to suffer and to die. There, with hands uplifted, He gave them His parting blessing; and as He blessed them, He raised Himself up before their eyes from the earth towards heaven. As He ascended, a cloud intervening took Him out of the sight of the awe-struck Apostles. Did they then recall His words to them: "You shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before"?

They stood gazing upwards after Him, till behold two men, or rather two angels, in white garments stood by them and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven shall so come as you have seen Him going into heaven." They fell down and adored God, after which they returned with great joy to Jerusalem, praising and blessing Him, and there awaited the coming of the Holy Ghost.

We cannot better conclude the Gospel story than in the words of St. John: "Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of His disciples which are not written in this book. If the other things which He did were written, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written. But these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the

Son of God ; and that believing you may have life in His name."*

* The Jewish historian Josephus, who died about A.D. 100, in his "Antiquities of the Jews," writes : "Now, there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works,—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the Divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him ; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."

PART VIII

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES CONTAINING THE EARLY MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLES

A.D. 30—63.

Besides his Gospel, St. Luke also wrote a second Book addressed to Theophilus,* which, from the first ages, has been called the "Acts of the Apostles." We cannot regard it as a history of what was done by all the Apostles, who were dispersed into different nations, and some of whom it does not mention even by name, except in the list given in the thirteenth verse of the first chapter; but it gives us a short view of the first establishment of the Christian Church, a small part of St. Peter's preaching and actions, and a more particular account of St. Paul's apostolical labours for some thirty-three years, down to the year A.D. 63, the ninth year of Nero, where the Book of the Acts ends. It does not bring the history of St. Paul down to his death. And if the Gospels show the seed sown in the field, this Book represents it as taking root, shooting up, and producing fruit. It includes, in short, the history of the infant Church, from the day of our Lord's Ascension into heaven till the liberation of St. Paul, two years after his arrival at Rome. It places before our eyes the singular providence of God in founding and protecting His Church, and shows us how the Apostles, without any assistance of learning, credit, power, or expectation of any temporal advantage, but relying solely on the power of truth and the virtue of the Holy Spirit, laboured without intermission in the propagation of the faith, till the power of God, working under the ignominy of the cross, eventually triumphed. The work may be conveniently divided into four parts. In the first eight chapters St. Luke gives the origin and progress of the Christian Church among the Jews; from the ninth to the sixteenth he shows how widely it was spread among the Gentiles; from the sixteenth to the twentieth he narrates the labours of St. Paul till his last journey to Jerusalem; and from the twentieth to the end he tells with what

* Theophilus signifies a friend or a lover of God. It is probable that this was some distinct person well known to St. Luke, and that he was a person of rank from the title, "Most Excellent," given to him by St. Luke.

patience he underwent innumerable trials, sufferings, and indignities, and his astonishing equanimity under every possible calamity. The leading facts contained herein are the choice of Matthias to be an Apostle in the place of Judas; the conversion of St. Paul; the call of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert; the persecution of the Christians by Herod Agrippa; the preaching of SS. Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles, by the express command of the Holy Ghost; the decree made at Jerusalem declaring that circumcision and other Jewish rites and ceremonies were not necessary in Gentile converts; the miraculous cures performed by the handkerchiefs which had only touched the body of St. Paul; whilst the latter part of the book is confined exclusively to the history of St. Paul, of whom St. Luke was the constant companion for several years. Where the *Acts* was written is doubtful, though most probably it was at Caesarea and at Rome, and that not later than about A.D. 63.

CHAPTER LIV

THE ELECTION OF MATTHIAS—THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST

Acts I., II.

"And his bishopric let another take" (Ps. cviii. 8).

"And it shall come to pass after this that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh. . . . Upon My servants and handmaids in those days I will pour forth My Spirit. . . . And it shall come to pass that every one that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel ii. 28-32).

The Apostles return to Jerusalem.

AFTER their return from Mount Olivet the Apostles retired to an upper room, where they persevered steadfastly in prayer, in company with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren,* and the women who had ministered to Him.

Our Blessed Lady.

This is the last mention in Scripture of our Blessed Lady. She lived the rest of her life with the Christians, especially with St. John the Evangelist, to whom our Lord commended her.

* These, the cousins of our Lord, were James, Joseph, Jude, and Simon, the sons of Alpheus and Mary, sister of the Blessed Virgin.

No doubt she passed some of her time in communicating to the Evangelists details of the life of her Divine Son.

St Peter addresses the disciples.

The number of Christ's followers gathered together in Jerusalem was about one hundred and twenty. Here, while they awaited the fulfilment of the promise of their Divine Master, Peter, in virtue of his supremacy as prince or chief of the Apostolic College, standing in their midst, invited them to fill up the place which had become vacant by the fall of Judas. "Men, brethren," he began, "the Scripture must be fulfilled which the Holy Ghost foretold by the mouth of David [Ps. xl. 10], concerning Judas, who was leader of them that apprehended Jesus; who was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. And he, indeed, possessed a field* of the reward of iniquity, and, being hanged, burst in the midst. This became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the same field was called in their tongue Haceldama, that is to say, the Field of Blood. For it was written in the Book of Psalms: Let their habitation become desolate, and let there be none to dwell therein [Ps. lxviii. 26]; and his bishopric let another take [Ps. cviii. 8]. Wherefore of these men who have been with us from the baptism of John until the day wherein Jesus was taken up from us, one must be made a witness with us of His Resurrection."

Matthias elected in place of Judas.

Two were at first selected, Joseph, who was also called Barsabas, surnamed the Just, and Matthias; but the final choice was decided by lot after recourse had been had to prayer for the Divine guidance. "Thou, O Lord," they prayed, "who knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two Thou hast chosen to take the place of this ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas hath by transgression

* This was the Potter's Field, which was bought by the priests with the money paid to Judas for his betrayal of our Lord.

fallen, that he might go to his own place." The lot fell upon Matthias, who was now numbered with the other Apostles.

Pentecost.

Ten days after our Lord's Ascension was the great Feast of Pentecost or Fiftieth, called also the Feast of Weeks, and of Harvest, the fiftieth day after the Pasch or Easter. It brought to Jerusalem Jews and proselytes* from nations the most remote, and was most suitable for making the first great proclamation to the world of our Lord's death and Resurrection.

The Festival found the disciples and the holy women assembled together in the upper room as usual, when suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind, which filled the whole house in which they were sitting. And there appeared to them cloven tongues, as it were of fire, resting upon each of them. Immediately all were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in different languages according as the Holy Ghost inspired them to speak. Beyond this external grace, the Holy Ghost gave them the internal grace of strength and courage to confess the religion they had learnt from their Master. With the coming of the Holy Spirit a most wonderful change was in a moment wrought in them. No longer timid and shrinking from danger, they fearlessly went forth to preach the Crucified One.

The gift of tongues.

When word of what had come to pass was noised through the city, men flocked together to satisfy themselves about the reality of what they had been told. Amazed at what they saw and heard, they exclaimed: "Behold, are not all

* Proselytes were of two classes: (1) "Proselytes of Righteousness," who were converts to the Jewish faith, circumcised, and admitted to all the Jewish rites and privileges: (2) "Proselytes of the Gate," who were not bound by circumcision or the ceremonial Law. They had to observe the Seven Precepts of Noe (vol. i., p. 18), and were probably instructed in the Ten Commandments.

these Galileans? and how have we every one heard our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians —we have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God. What meaneth this?" Some in derision suggested: "These men are full of new wine."

St. Peter's first sermon.

The insulting words caught the ears of Peter, whereupon he, who before, when addressed by a weak maid-servant, had denied his Master, now came forward, and thus boldly addressed the people: "Ye men of Judaea, and all you that dwell in Jerusalem, give ear to my words: These men are not drunk, seeing that it is but the third hour;* but this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel: 'It shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh . . . and upon My servants indeed, and upon My handmaids will I pour out in those days of My Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above, and signs on the earth beneath. . . . And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved' (Joel ii. 28). Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you also know; this same being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hands of wicked men have crucified and slain." He then went on to declare that the Resurrection of Christ was the fulfilment of David's prophecy: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, nor suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. xv. 10). He showed them that the pro-

* Nine o'clock a.m.

phetical words of the Psalm referred not to David in person, since he was dead, and his body had remained in the grave without rising from the dead. But "this Jesus," he continued, "hath God raised up again, whereof we are all witnesses. Being exalted therefore by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which you see and hear. Now David ascended not into heaven; but he himself said: 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool' (Ps. cix. 1).* Therefore let all the house of Israel know most assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, to be both Lord and Christ."

Three thousand converted.

St. Peter's words touched their hearts; and moved, with sorrow for their sins, especially for those against the Messias, they cried out to the Apostles: "What shall we do, men and brethren?" "Do penance," answered Peter, "and be baptised every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, whomsoever the Lord our God shall call." After employing many other exhortations, he ended with the words: "Save yourselves from this perverse generation." All who received his word, and believed in the truth which he preached, were baptised; and on this first Day of Pentecost as many as three thousand were converted.

* It was customary for conquerors to degrade their captives by putting their feet on their necks.

CHAPTER LV

THE FIRST CONVERTS—CURE OF THE LAME MAN —PETER AND JOHN BROUGHT BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM

Acts II., III., IV.

"In Thee shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 3).

The Church militant.

THE Church militant, that visible society of men joined together in Christ which may be traced throughout ecclesiastical history down to our own days, and which will continue, in virtue of our Lord's promise, to the end of time, increased daily more and more from the Feast of Pentecost. "Sooner," says St. Chrysostom, "shall the sun be extinguished than the Church be obscured." She is ever visible, and ever speaking with authority to all that use or do not willingly shut their eyes and ears. She speaks as plainly as the Gospel displays to us the true Christ.

The early converts.

From the account given by St. Luke of the manner of living of these early converts, we see how they adhered to the teaching of the Apostles, and how united they were in faith and charity: "They persevered in the doctrine of the Apostles, in the communication of the Breaking of Bread, and in prayers." They sold their goods and possessions, and had all things in common, giving to each one according to his necessities. They passed from house to house, thus making use of one another's private homes for "the Breaking of Bread," that they might conceal the Holy Mysteries from the gaze of the profane. They took the food which was set before them with joy and simplicity of heart, and frequently went to the Temple to pray together, while the Apostles, to confirm their doctrine, wrought many miracles, which

produced a feeling of awe and respect, even among those who had not as yet joined their ranks.

Although by the death of our Saviour the existing ceremonies and sacrifices were abrogated, and the New Alliance had succeeded the Old, still it was not in the design of God that the faithful should at once separate themselves from the rest of the Jews, or entirely give up the observances of the Law. They continued to observe them as long as the utility of the Church required it; and thus they avoided giving scandal to their weaker brethren, and driving them from submitting to the doctrines of the Church. Hence we find them observing the ritual of the Jewish religion, and assembling for prayer on the days and hours appointed, just as our Lord and His Apostles had been accustomed to do. They had their children circumcised, and abstained from the forbidden meats. We see even St. Paul making and keeping the Nazarite vow, and hastening back to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost.

The cripple made whole by Peter and John.

On a certain occasion, when Peter and John went up to the Temple at the ninth hour* to perform their devotions, a poor man, forty years old, who had been lame from his birth, had been carried to the Temple, and placed at the gate called the Beautiful, that he might beg from those who assembled for prayer. Seeing Peter and John about to enter the Temple, he entreated them for an alms. Peter said to him: "Look upon us!" This the man did, and fixed his eyes earnestly upon the Apostles in the eager expectation of receiving something from them. "Silver and gold," continued Peter, "I have none; but what I have I give thee: in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise and walk." He then took him by the right hand and raised him up.

* The third, the sixth, and the ninth hour—*i.e.*, nine o'clock in the morning, noon, and three in the afternoon—were the three appointed hours of prayer.

When the man found that he had gained the use of his feet, and was now able to stand, he leaped for joy, and with the Apostles entered the Temple, praising and thanking God.

Second recorded sermon of Peter.

The people were struck with wonder and amazement at seeing the man thus miraculously cured, and in great numbers followed Peter and John, to whom the poor man clung out of joy and gratitude, to Solomon's porch. St. Peter seized the opportunity thus presented of publicly preaching in the Temple Him in whose Name the miracle had been performed. "Ye men of Israel," he began, "why wonder you at this? or why look you upon us, as if by our own strength and power we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom you indeed delivered up and denied before the face of Pilate, when he judged that He should be released. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. And the Author of life ye killed, whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. And His Name, through the faith of His Name, hath made this man strong, whom you have seen and known; and the faith which is by Him hath given this perfect soundness in the sight of you all.

"And now, brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance, as also your rulers. But those things which God had foretold by the mouth of all the Prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. Be penitent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

He then went on to show them that if disobedience to the ordinances of God, made known by the voice of Moses, was punishable with death, how much more severe would be the punishment of those who refused obedience to the doctrines of Jesus, to whom all the Prophets bore testi-

mony, and whom he then preached. "Moses indeed said: A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you out of your brethren like unto me: Him you shall hear, according to all things whatsoever He shall speak to you. And it shall be that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people'" (Deut. xviii. 15). "And all the Prophets from Samuel have told of these days. You are the children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made to our fathers, saying to Abraham: 'And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' To you first God raising up His Son, hath sent Him to bless you: that every one may convert himself from his wickedness."

Peter's discourse was abruptly terminated by the enraged priests, who came up with the officers of the Temple and the Sadducees, and seizing both the Apostles, took them into custody. The Sadducees in particular, who denied the resurrection of the dead, were exasperated at their declaring it in the Name of Jesus. The sermon, however, had produced its effect; for, in consequence of it and of the miracle which preceded it, five thousand new converts were added to the Church.

Five thousand converted. Jealousy of the Sadducees.

Next morning the two Apostles were brought before the Sanhedrim, which had assembled under Annas, and were asked by what power, and in whose name, they had healed the lame man. Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, declared in reply: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, even by Him this man standeth here whole. This Jesus is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, which is become the head of the corner [Ps. cxvii. 22]; neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name

Peter and John before the Sanhedrim.

under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved." The constancy of Peter and John surprised the council. Knowing that they were simple, unlettered men, they wondered at their knowledge of the Scriptures; nor could they contradict the fact of the miracle, seeing that the man who had been healed was present, and stood upright in their midst. They therefore commanded the Apostles to withdraw till they had deliberated among themselves what ought to be done.

Peter and John are cautioned and dismissed.

Altogether they were perplexed, and in greater fear than the Apostles. News of the miracle had been spread abroad through the city, and because of it so great an impression had been made on the people that severe measures of repression would have raised a tumult. They saw that they could do nothing but threaten, and so calling the Apostles before them once again, they charged them to speak no more of Jesus. Peter and John asked them if it was reasonable and just to hearken to men rather than to God, and added: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." After being further threatened by the council, they were dismissed, whereupon they at once returned to their friends and related all that had befallen them.

A sign from heaven.

They were received with joy, and all united in prayer and thanksgiving to God, beseeching Him to continue to confirm their preaching by signs and wonders done in the Name of Jesus, the only Son of God. Their prayer was answered by a sign from heaven. The place in which they were assembled was shaken, and all were filled with the Holy Ghost. Their hearts were inflamed by a new motion of grace, and they preached the word of God with confidence: "and with great power did the Apostles give testimony of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord, and great grace was in them all."

CHAPTER LVI

SIN OF ANANIAS AND SAPHIRA—MIRACLES WROUGHT BY THE APOSTLES

Acts V.

"He that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do" (John xiv. 12).

Barnabas.

THE multitude of believers, we are told, had but one heart and one soul, neither did any one of them say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but all was for the common use, as every one had need. Those who were owners of lands or of houses sold them, and laid the price obtained at the feet of the Apostles. The first mentioned to have done this was Joseph, surnamed Barnabas, or the Son of Consolation, a Levite of Cyprus.

Death of Ananias.

Now, a certain man named Ananias, who, with his wife, had sold a field, kept back a part of the price of it, and brought the rest to the Apostles, pretending that it was the whole sum. But St. Peter knew by inspiration the deceit of the unhappy man, and sternly rebuked the prevarication of which he had been guilty. "Why," he asked, "hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost, and by fraud keep back part of the price of the field? Whilst it remained, did it not remain to thee? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto man, but unto God." No sooner had St. Peter uttered these words than the terror-stricken Ananias fell down and expired. The young men who were present rose up immediately, and carried out the body for burial.

After the space of about three hours Saphira came in,

quite unconscious of what had befallen her husband. "Tell me, woman," said St. Peter to her, "whether you sold the field for so much?" "Yea," she answered, "for so much," thus uttering the lie direct. St. Peter said to her: "Why have you agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of those who have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out." That instant she fell down at his feet and died, and the same young men took up her body and buried it beside that of her husband.

Death of Saphira.

In the Old Law, as we have seen,* God manifested especial severity against those who first transgressed His laws, that their punishment might serve as a wholesome warning to the rest of mankind; so now, in the early days of the Church, we find Him making severe examples of the transgressors among those whose duty it was to preserve in its original purity "that seed which the Master was soon to scatter over the face of the earth."

The severe punishment of Ananias and Saphira struck terror into all who saw or heard of it; yet, while the faint-hearted shrank from joining the ranks of the new converts, the number of the faithful continued to increase.

Daily they assembled in Solomon's porch, which was large and open to all, both Jews and Gentiles. Soon the fame of the Apostles spread, not only through Jerusalem, but into the neighbouring cities, and people brought to them their sick, and such as were possessed by unclean spirits, and they healed them. What Christ had foretold, viz., that His disciples should do greater miracles than He had done, seemed now partly to be fulfilled; for the sick that were laid on beds and couches along the street by their friends recovered their health by St. Peter's shadow falling upon them.

Great miracles attest the Apostles' preaching.

* See vol. i., p. 137.

When the Sadducees saw their warning to the Apostles thus disregarded, and the converts to the new faith daily multiplying, their indignation knew no bounds. They even laid hands on the Apostles and cast them into the common prison. But an angel opened their prison doors during the night and set them free, bidding them go and preach the word of life in the Temple.

The Apostles cast into prison.

Next morning the Sanhedrim assembled, and sent their officers to bring the Apostles before them; but lo! the prison was empty. They hurried back with the astounding news: "The prison, indeed, we found shut with all diligence, and the keepers standing before the doors: but opening it, we found no man within." Before the council had time to recover from their surprise, a young man came before them, to tell them of another wonder: "Behold, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the Temple and teaching the people."

They are miraculously released.

Fear of a tumult among the people prevented the use of open violence; yet an officer was sent to summon the Apostles before the Sanhedrim, though he was cautioned not to bind them or to use force. When they appeared, the High Priest thus reproached them: "We commanded you that you should not teach in this Name; and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and you have a mind to bring the blood of this Man upon us."* With the same courage as he had shown in their presence before, Peter replied: "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging Him upon a tree. Him God hath exalted with His right hand to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. And we

Peter's reply to the High Priest.

* To fix the guilt of the blood of Jesus on the nation.

are witnesses of these things, and the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to all those that obey Him (is also Witness with us)."

Speech of Gamaliel.

Peter's answer exasperated the council, and they would have voted the death of the Apostles immediately had it not been for the wise and moderate counsel of one of their members, Gamaliel, a Pharisee and doctor of the Law, a man greatly esteemed by the people, and, as we shall see, the master of St. Paul. "Ye men of Israel," said he, "consider with yourselves what you are about to do with these men. Before these days rose up Theodas, who affirmed himself to be somebody, and who drew to his side four hundred followers. He was slain, and all who believed in him were dispersed and reduced to nothing. After him rose up Judas, the Galilean, who drew many people after him. He also perished, and his followers were dispersed. Meddle not, therefore, with these men; for if this be the work of men only it will soon fall to nothing; but if it be from God you cannot hinder it, and you will only make yourselves guilty by resisting the designs of God."

The Apostles are scourged and dismissed.

This wise advice of Gamaliel had its effect. It was adopted by the Sanhedrim, but not before their rage had been assuaged by the infliction of some punishment. The Apostles were scourged, and then dismissed with the injunction never to speak in the Name of Jesus again. They went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the Name of Jesus. Thus, in tribulation, they abounded in inward peace and joy, which made them insensible to their exterior sufferings. Their zeal, far from being damped, seemed to burn all the more ardently, and they continued to teach and preach daily in the Temple, and from house to house, faith in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER LVII

THE SEVEN DEACONS—MARTYRDOM OF ST. STEPHEN

Acts VI., VII.

"Heaven is My throne, and the earth My footstool: what is this house that you will build to Me? And what is this place of My rest? My hand made all these things. But to whom shall I have respect, but to him that is poor and little, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My words?" (Isa. lxvi. 1, 2).

As the number of converts increased, the greater became the difficulty of distributing the common stock; "and there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, for that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."

The Grecians and the Hebrews.

By the Grecians, or Hellenists, as they are sometimes called, we are to understand those newly-converted Christians who were indeed Jews, but who had been born in places where the Greek tongue was spoken; as by Hebrews is meant those Jewish converts to the Christian faith who had been born and bred in places where they spoke not Greek, but Aramaic or Syro-Chaldaic, which was then the language of the Jews of Palestine.* What is meant, therefore, by the widows of the Grecians being neglected would seem to be that they were less regarded, or less favoured in the daily distribution, than such of the Jewish race who spoke the language of the Jews as it was then spoken in Palestine.

The Apostles welcomed the opportunity of freeing themselves from a burden which could be equally well performed by others, and which took up much of their time that might be better employed in the daily preaching of

* See vol. i., p. 600.

the Word, for which they had been sent. "It is not fit," they said, "that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word." Seven men, therefore, were chosen with the approbation of all, and were brought before the Apostles, who prayed over them, and imposed hands upon them. Their names were Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch.

The seven deacons.

These deacons, however, were ordained for a sacred ministry, and not merely to manage the common stock belonging to the faithful. This is evident from the qualifications required in them, for they were to be full of the Holy Ghost; and from their ecclesiastical functions mentioned in the *Acts*, in the Epistles of St. Paul, and by the ancient Fathers. St. Philip and St. Stephen preached the Gospel immediately, as we find in the sixth and eighth chapters of the Acts, and baptised those that were converted. In the first ages the deacons assisted the Bishops and priests at the Divine office, and distributed the Sacred Chalice of the Holy Eucharist. They succeeded, as it were, to the Levites of the Old Law. "At the commencement of Christianity," says Calmet, "the faithful generally received the Holy Eucharist after a repast, which they took together, in imitation of our Saviour, who instituted the Sacrament after supper. Now the deacons, who presided over the first tables, after having distributed the corporeal food to the assembly, ministered also the food of life, which they received from the hand of the Bishop. Thus were they ministers both

Duties of the deacons.

of the common and the sacred tables. Afterwards they had assistants, called sub-deacons, and as among the Gentile converts there did not exist that community of goods as at Jerusalem, their chief employment became to serve the Bishop in the oblation of the Holy Sacrifice." Hence St. Ignatius writes: "It is ours to please by all means the deacons, who are for the ministry of Jesus Christ; for they are not servitors of meat and drink, but ministers of the Church of God. For what are deacons but imitators or followers of Christ, ministering to Bishops, as Christ to His Father, and working unto Him a clean and immaculate work, even as St. Stephen to St. James?"

Great appears to have been the impetus given to the spread of the faith by this institution, and many of the Jewish priests were drawn to profess their belief in the Crucified One: "And the word of the Lord was increased, and the number of the disciples was multiplied very much in Jerusalem: a great multitude also of the priests obeyed the faith."

The most eminent of the seven deacons was Stephen. Full of grace and fortitude, he performed great wonders and miracles among the people; and so convincing was his eloquence that none were able to resist the wisdom and spirit with which he spoke. Among those who opposed him were the chiefs of the synagogues of the Libertines,* of the Cyreneans, of the Alexandrians, and of those that were of Cilicia and Asia. But when they found themselves worsted in argument, and unable to answer the *spirit of wisdom* which directed him, they suborned false witnesses, who, when he was brought before the Sanhedrim, accused him of speaking against the Temple and the Law, and of blaspheming against God and against Moses. "We have heard him

Accusations against Stephen.

* The Libertines (Lat. *libertini*, "freedmen") were those whose fathers had been made slaves under Pompey and the Roman generals, but who had been restored to *liberty*, and had been made *free*.

say," they averred, "that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the traditions which Moses delivered to us." Stephen stood in the midst of the assembly, and as they fixed their eyes upon him, they saw that his face shone with a wonderful brightness, and appeared to them as the face of an angel.

Stephen's defence.

Questioned by the High Priest, Stephen briefly reviewed the history of God's chosen people from the call of Abraham down to his own time. He showed his persecutors that he was falsely accused of speaking against Moses or the Law, for which he had the greatest veneration. He pointed out to them that God's presence was not confined to the Temple, which had already once been destroyed; that the true worship of God may subsist without a temple, as it did in the time of Abraham and the Patriarchs before the Law was given or the Temple was built; and that, as their forefathers had been rebellious to Moses, and disobedient to the Prophets, whom many times they persecuted even to death, so they had lately resisted, persecuted, and crucified the Messias: "They have slain those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have received the Law by the dispensation of angels, and have not kept it."

Stung to the heart by his words, the members of the Sanhedrim gnashed their teeth with rage; but he, looking steadfastly up to heaven, exclaimed with rapture: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." Losing all control over their fury, they stopped their ears, so as not to hear his supposed blasphemy, and rushed upon him. In contempt of the Roman prerogative of life and death, and without any regular sentence having been passed upon him, Stephen was hurried out of the city to be stoned to death. They who stoned him laid their garments at the

feet of a man named Saul, who, through Stephen's prayers, became later the great St. Paul.* Whilst the stones were being showered upon him, Stephen fell upon his knees, and in the midst of his sufferings prayed aloud, like his Divine Master: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Then, after repeating the words "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," he fell asleep in the Lord. "And Saul was consenting to his death." His body was buried by the faithful with great devotion and reverence: "Devout men," we are told, "took care of Stephen's funeral, and made great mourning over him."

CHAPTER LVIII

PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS (A.D. 37)—SAMARITANS CONVERTED BY PHILIP—BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

Acts VIII.

"The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the son; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and shall put them to death. And you shall be hated by all men for My Name's sake" (St. Matt. x. 21, 22).

First general persecution.

SAUL, as we have seen, was most prominent at the martyrdom of St. Stephen, and in the first general persecution which followed it he especially distinguished himself by his violence towards the Christians. He ravaged the Church at Jerusalem, entering into the houses of the faithful and dragging away to prison both men and women. Such as could not conceal themselves from him in the city dispersed throughout Judaea and Samaria, or fled into different

* "Si Stephanus non sic orasset, Ecclesia Paulum non haberet" (If Stephen had not thus prayed, the Church would not have to glory in a St. Paul).—ST. AUGUSTINE.

countries; but the Apostles remained at Jerusalem. Those who left the city carried with them the light of the Gospel wherever they went. In this way did Almighty God make use of the malice of His enemies to the greater exaltation and glory of His own Name. As St. Augustine remarks, they were burning torches which gave of their holy fire to every place in which they were scattered.

Philip preaches in Samaria.

Thus it was that the people of Samaria were instructed in the faith of Christ by St. Philip, one of the seven deacons. Philip confirmed his preaching with many miracles. Unclean spirits obeyed him, and at his word departed out of those in whom they had taken up their abode. Many suffering from palsy, and such as were lame, were healed, and there was great joy in the city.

Simon Magus.

In Samaria at this time was a man named Simon, a noted magician, who had long imposed upon its inhabitants by laying claim to Divine powers, and supporting his claim by his sorceries: "To whom all hearkened, from the least to the greatest, saying: This man is the power of God, which is called great." But the people were converted by Philip's preaching the kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, and great numbers, both men and women, were baptised. Simon himself believed, or pretended to believe, and, being baptised like the rest, attached himself to Philip.

Peter and John go down to Samaria

When the Apostles at Jerusalem heard that the word of God had been preached to the Samaritans, they sent Peter and John to administer to them the Sacrament of Confirmation by prayer and the imposition of hands: "Who, when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost." From Philip, who was only a deacon, the converts could not receive that plenitude of grace and those gifts which are received through a Bishop in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Sin of Simon Magus.

When Simon, the magician, saw the wonderful effects which followed the imposition of hands by the Apostles, in his vanity he desired their mysterious power, and offered the Apostles money if they would confer its possession upon him. His offer so shocked St. Peter that he turned to Simon, and sternly denounced his wickedness. "May thy money," he said, "perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast no part or lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Do penance, therefore, for this wickedness, and pray to God that perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven; for I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity." Instead of following the advice of St. Peter, he begged the Apostles to pray, not that God might touch his heart and give him repentance, but that evil might not befall him, that he might escape the sentence denounced by Peter—as one who hates not sin, but fears the punishment which is the consequence of it.

Simony.

It is from Simon that the sin of simony is so called. It is the name given to all acts of trafficking in the gifts of God, by buying, selling, or giving money for things spiritual.

The Ethiopian eunuch.

The Apostles returned to Jerusalem, and St. Philip was directed by an angel to go towards the south, to the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, through the south-western desert. On arriving there, he saw the chariot of an Ethiopian eunuch who was the treasurer and trusted minister of Candace, the Queen of Ethiopia. This man had become a Jewish proselyte—that is, a convert to the Jewish religion—and showed his zeal and devotion to his new faith, not only by coming to worship at Jerusalem, but by reading the Prophets in his chariot as he rode along. He was now returning home,

and, as he approached Philip, he was reading a passage from Isaias in a voice sufficiently loud to be heard by Philip. Acting on the impulse of the Spirit, Philip approached the chariot, and asked the Ethiopian if he understood what he was reading. "How can I," was the reply, "unless someone show me?"* and he desired Philip to mount the chariot and sit beside him.

Baptism of the eunuch.

The passage he was reading was this: "As a sheep He was led to the slaughter; and like a lamb without a voice before His shearer, so openeth He not His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7). "Is it of himself the prophet speaketh this, or of another?" asked the eunuch. From the text just furnished, Philip began to speak to him of Christ and His doctrine, to which the eunuch listened with such close attention, that on drawing near to a pool of water he exclaimed: "See, here is water! What hindereth me from being baptised?" "Thou mayest," Philip answered, "if thou believest with thy whole heart." He humbly confessed: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The horses were brought to a stand, and Philip, going down with the eunuch into the water, baptised him.

No sooner had they come out of the water than the Spirit of the Lord miraculously took away Philip from the eyes of the eunuch, who continued on his journey rejoicing in the grace conferred upon him. Philip was next seen at Azotus, whence he passed, preaching and teaching in the cities of Philistia as far as Caesarea.

* How different was the eunuch from those whom we so commonly see who think the Scriptures are everywhere plain, and the sense open to all! The Apostles themselves could not understand them till Christ gave them the knowledge: "Then He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures" (St. Luke xxiv. 45). St. Peter, too, tells us that in the Epistles of St. Paul "are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other Scriptures, to their own perdition" (2 Epis. iii. 16).

CHAPTER LIX

CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL (A.D. 37)

Acts IX.

"Benjamin, a ravenous wolf, in the morning shall eat the prey, and in the evening shall divide the spoil" (Gen. xlix. 27).

Saul of Tarsus.

We first hear of Saul in connection with the death of St. Stephen, and the persecution which followed. In his conversion we cannot fail to see the powerful effect of St. Stephen's dying prayer for his persecutors, the chief of whom was Saul himself: "And Saul was consenting to his death" (Acts vii. 59). He was a Jew, born at Tarsus, the chief city of Cilicia, a province of Asia Minor, as we gather from his own words: "I am indeed a Jew, a man of Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the truth of the Law of the fathers, zealous for the Law, as also you are this day: circumcised on the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as to the Law a Pharisee, as to zeal persecuting the Church of God" (Acts xxii. 3; Phil. iii. 5, 6). According to the custom of the Jews of bringing up their sons to some occupation, Saul was taught the trade of a tent-maker.

Saul's persecution of the infant Church.

The fury with which he persecuted the infant Church was unrelenting. Even after the faithful had fled from Jerusalem before the storm of persecution, Saul was not satisfied, but went to the High Priest for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, authorising him to bring back to Jerusalem any men or women whom he might find there professing themselves followers of Christ.

As he drew near to Damascus, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," he was suddenly surrounded by a bright light from heaven; and, falling down on the ground, he heard a voice calling to him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" "Who art Thou, Lord?" asked Saul. "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest," was the reply. "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad."* Trembling and astonished, Saul exclaimed: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Arise," said Jesus, "and go into the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do." Those who accompanied Saul were amazed; for, though they saw no one, yet they heard the voice. In obedience to the command, Paul at once rose up, only to find that, though his eyes were open, "he could not see for the brightness of that light." His comrades, however, took him by the hand and led him to Damascus, where he remained blind for three days, during which period he neither ate nor drank, but spent the time in prayer.

The conversion of Saul.

There was at this time, at Damascus, a certain disciple, by name Ananias, to whom the Lord appeared in a vision and said: "Ananias!" He answered: "Behold, I am here, Lord." The Lord said to him: "Arise, and go into the street that is called Strait, and seek in the house of Judas one named Saul of Tarsus; for behold he prayeth." "Lord," Ananias answered: "I have heard from many of this man how great evils he hath done to Thy saints in Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke Thy Name." "Nevertheless, go," said the Lord, "for this man is to Me a vessel of election to carry My Name before the Gentiles, and kings,

Saul receives his sight through Ananias.

* A goad is a pointed instrument used to stimulate a beast to move faster. The metaphor is taken from oxen kicking when pricked to go onward.

and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake." Ananias waited no longer, but went to the house where Saul was. Entering in, he laid his hands upon him and said: "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me, He who appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Immediately there fell from the eyes of Saul as it were scales, and he received his sight. Ananias said to him: "The God of our fathers hath pre-ordained thee that thou shouldst know His will, and see the Just One, and shouldst hear the voice from His mouth; for thou shalt be His witness to all men of those things which thou hast seen and heard" (Acts xxii. 14, 15). Saul then rose up and was baptised. It happened also that, at the time Ananias entered, Saul had a vision in which the coming of Ananias and what the Spirit had revealed to him were clearly shown, that he might know by this that Ananias was sent to him by God. For some days Saul remained with the disciples at Damascus, where he appeared in the synagogues, and preached the faith which he had come to destroy.

Saul retires into Arabia.

From the account St. Paul gives us of himself (Gal. i. 15-17) we find that he did not remain long at Damascus before he withdrew into Arabia, where he spent some three years in retirement, and then returned to Damascus. "When it pleased Him who separated me from my mother's womb," he writes, "and called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I condescended not to flesh and blood, neither went I to the Apostles who were before me, but I went into Arabia, and again I returned to Damascus." He did not then consider it necessary to consult the other Apostles, men who were his countrymen; consequently he did not go to Jerusalem to be enlightened by them, as he had been instructed

by Jesus Christ Himself, from whom, and not from the Apostles, he received his Apostleship.

Saul's escape from Damascus.

When he returned to Damascus, increased in spiritual strength, he there preached to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. They were unable to withstand his arguments, and so violently were they embittered against him that they conspired to kill him. In their attempt to seize him they were joined by the Governor of Damascus, under Aretas, the Arabian King, who, with a guard, kept watch over the city gates to prevent his escape. But he was saved by his friends, who let him down by the wall in a basket through a window, as, on a former occasion, Rahab had let down the two spies at Jericho. He thus escaped, and repaired to Jerusalem.

Saul in Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem the memory of his deeds of violence was still fresh in the minds of the faithful, who as yet had received no certain information of his conversion. The disciples mistrusted and feared him, till Barnabas introduced him to the Apostles, and gave an account of the wonderful change that the grace of God had wrought in him. The reason for his visit to Jerusalem, he tells us, was to see Peter; and, although he remained in Jerusalem fifteen days, the only Apostles he saw were Peter and James, the cousin of our Lord and Bishop of Jerusalem.

Saul's vision in the Temple.

In Jerusalem Paul did not remain inactive, but boldly preached faith in Christ to the Gentiles, by which term we are probably to understand those who had been Gentiles, but who had become converts to the Jewish religion. He disputed also with the Hellenists, or Greeks, who became so infuriated against him that they formed a plot to kill him. On one occasion, while praying in the Temple, he fell into a trance, when for the second time he had a vision, in which our

Lord appeared to him. "Make haste," He said, "and go quickly out of Jerusalem, because they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me. . . . Go, for unto the nations afar off will I send thee" (Acts xxii. 18-21). He was saved from the fury of his enemies by the brethren conducting him to Caesarea, whence he sailed to his native city of Tarsus.

Rest from persecution.

There now came to the Church a season of peace and outward calm*: "The Church, indeed, had peace throughout all Judaea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and was increased, walking in the fear of the Lord, and was filled with the consolation of the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER LX

ST. PETER AT LYDDA AND JOPPA—CORNELIUS, THE FIRST GENTILE CONVERT, BAPTISED BY ST. PETER

Acts IX., X.

"And it shall come to pass that every one that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel ii. 32).

Aeneas healed by Peter at Lydda.

In the interval of rest just mentioned, during a circuit which he made through Judaea, Galilee, and Samaria, visiting the churches there established and encouraging the faithful, St. Peter came to Lydda, a town lying to the north-west of Jerusalem, in the plain of Saron, not far from the coast. Here he healed a certain Aeneas, who for eight years had been

* The attention of the Jews was at this time diverted from the Christians by the attempt of Caligula, the Roman Emperor (A.D. 37-41), to desecrate the Temple by setting up his own statue in the sanctuary. The Jews were on the verge of a rebellion, which was only averted by his death.

confined to his bed with palsy. Going into his house, Peter saluted him with the glad tidings: "Aeneas, the Lord Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed." And immediately he arose. The fame of this miracle quickly spread through Lydda and the plain of Saron, and led to a general conversion of the inhabitants.

Peter raises Tabitha to life at Joppa.

Some nine miles to the north-west of Lydda, and situated on the coast, stands the seaport of Joppa, where dwelt a pious woman named Tabitha, or Dorcas (a *gazelle*), who was remarkable for her charity, particularly in clothing the poor: "She was full of good works and alms-deeds, which she performed." Her death about this time came as a severe blow to the brethren at Joppa, who, when they heard that Peter was at Lydda, sent two men to him with the request: "Delay not to come even to us." Peter rose up at once and went with them, and on his arrival at Tabitha's house was conducted to the upper chamber, where the body was laid out awaiting burial. Many widows who had been the recipients of Tabitha's charity were there weeping; and, in proof of her good deeds, they pointed to the coats and garments which had been made by the labour of her own hands. That he might not be disturbed while he prayed, Peter requested them to leave the room. After kneeling for a little while in prayer, he turned to the body and said: "Tabitha, arise!" She opened her eyes, and, seeing Peter, sat up. He then took her by the hand and raised her from the couch; and when he had called in the faithful, he presented her alive to them. Peter after this remained at Joppa, dwelling in the house of a man named Simon, a tanner.

Cornelius.

There was in Caesarea at this time a centurion named Cornelius, belonging to the Italian cohort, "a religious man, and one that feared God, with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and

prayed to God always." Cornelius was one day favoured with a vision. As he was praying in his house about the ninth hour* of the day, an angel suddenly stood before him and called him by name. Trembling with fear at the unexpected apparition, he asked: "What is it, Lord?" The angel answered: "Thy prayer and thy alms have ascended for a memorial in the sight of God. And now send men to Joppa to call hither one Simon, who is surnamed Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner: he shall tell thee what thou must do."

Peter's vision.

When the angel had disappeared from sight, Cornelius called two of his servants and a soldier who feared God, and, after relating to them what he had seen, sent them to Joppa. Next day, when, about noon, they were already approaching the city, Peter, who had retired to the upper part of the house to pray, was also favoured with a vision. He saw the heavens opened, and, as it were, a great sheet descending, let down by the four corners from heaven to the earth; and looking therein, he saw a great multitude of living creatures, fowls of the air, creeping things of the earth, and four-footed beasts. At the same time he heard a voice bidding him arise, kill, and eat. "Far be it from me, Lord," replied Peter, "for I have never eaten any common or unclean thing." The voice spoke to him a second time: "That which God hath purified do not thou call common." This strange scene was repeated three times, and presently the cloth was taken up again into heaven.

Peter goes to Caesarea.

While Peter was wondering within himself what could be the meaning of the vision, the Spirit said to him: "Behold, three men seek thee. Arise, therefore, go down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them." He delayed not, but went down to ask the messengers the reason for

* Three o'clock in the afternoon.

their coming to him. They said to him: "Cornelius, a centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and that hath good testimony from all the nations of the Jews, received an answer of a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words from thee." Peter detained the messengers that day; and next morning he and six of the brethren from Joppa accompanied them to Caesarea.

Cornelius welcomes Peter.

Cornelius, in the meantime, had assembled his kinsmen and special friends, and with them awaited the Apostle's arrival. On learning that Peter had come, Cornelius went to meet him, and welcomed him with marks of the greatest respect. According to the custom of Eastern people, he prostrated himself before Peter, thus paying him such honour as is given to persons of the highest dignity. The humble Apostle stretched out his hand, saying: "Rise: I myself also am a man." They entered the house together, and there Peter saw many Gentiles who had assembled to welcome him and to hear from him the Divine message. Peter began by telling them how great an aversion a Jew had to hold converse with, or to visit, one of another nation, but that God had shown him that he was not to call any man common or unclean. He then asked for what cause they had summoned him. Cornelius related his vision fully, and concluded his account of it by saying that all there present were desirous of hearing whatsoever the Lord should deign to make known to them by the mouth of His Apostle.

St. Peter's address.

Peter then understood from this vision he had seen that he had to make known the word of God to the Gentiles also, and said: "In truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh justice is

acceptable to Him."* He then went on to preach to them the Gospel of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, of whom the Prophets had given testimony, and in whose Name all who believe in Him receive remission of sins; the same who had commanded them to testify that He had been appointed as Judge of the living and the dead.

Baptism of Cornelius.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Ghost descended upon Cornelius and his assembled friends, and made His coming known as on the day of Pentecost; for they were instantly endowed with the gift of tongues, and began to glorify God. Those Christians who had accompanied Peter were astonished to see that such extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were given to uncircumcised Gentiles; but Peter, fully believing that those on whom the Holy Ghost had descended were to be made members of the Christian Church, at once commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. At their entreaty he remained with them some days.

Peter accused of consorting with the Gentiles.

When, at length, he returned to Jerusalem, he was accused by the Jewish converts of having had intercourse with the uncircumcised Gentiles; but he silenced their objections by a simple recital of his vision and of what had happened at the house of Cornelius. The consideration of this glorious episode of the calling of the Gentiles to the light of faith evoked words of praise and thanksgiving from the faithful, who glorified God, saying: "God hath thus also given to the Gentiles repentance unto life."

* True faith is always to be presupposed, without which, says St. Paul, "it is impossible to please God" (Heb. xi. 6).

CHAPTER LXI

MANY CONVERTED AT ANTIOCH—A SECOND PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH UNDER HEROD AGRIPPA, A.D. 42

Acts XI., XII.

"They will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles" (St. Matt. x. 17, 18).

Antioch, the cradle of Gentile Christianity.

After the persecution which followed St. Stephen's death, we find that the Gospel, which Christ had commanded His Apostles to preach to the ends of the earth, was carried by the exiles from Jerusalem not only through Judaea and Samaria, but also to Phoenicia, as well as to Cyprus and Antioch. Indeed, Antioch, which is situated on the river Orontes, has been well styled "the cradle and metropolis of Gentile Christianity"; and it was here, too, that the followers of Christ first received the name of *Christians*.* Antioch was the capital of the Greek Kings of Syria, and afterwards became the residence of the Roman Governors of Syria, besides being the great emporium of the East. Wherever those who had been dispersed from Jerusalem by the persecution preached the Gospel, they were accustomed to preach at first only to the Jews; but some of the Hellenists among them, who were from Cyprus and Cyrene, when they came to Antioch, preached also to the Greeks in that city; "and the hand of the Lord was with them,

* "St. Peter," writes the Abbé Fouard, "did not go to Antioch before the year A.D. 40, and only then did he establish there his Apostolic seat, which he transferred to Rome two years later. The Acts do not mention the foundation of this episcopate, but tradition has preserved a record of it, and it is this fact which has given Antioch its title of Metropolitan City of the East."

and many believing were converted to the Lord." When tidings of these things reached the faithful at Jerusalem, they were filled with joy to hear of the great numbers who had embraced the faith at Antioch, and sent to them Barnabas, "a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith."

A famine foretold by Agabus.

About this time, certain prophets, chief among whom was Agabus, went down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and foretold the approach of a great famine at Jerusalem. The Christians there, alarmed for the well-being of the brethren in Judaea, set to work at once to collect funds for them, which they put into the hands of Saul and Barnabas to provide against the time of distress. It was this same prophet Agabus who afterwards forewarned St. Paul of his coming imprisonment (Acts xxi. 10, 11).

Saul and Barnabas at Antioch.

On his arrival at Antioch Barnabas rejoiced to see the good work thus happily begun, and with great zeal exhorted the new converts to perseverance: "And a great multitude was added to the Lord." With the intention of finding an associate who would co-operate with him, Barnabas went to Tarsus in quest of Saul, whither, as we have already seen, he had retired for a while. The two came back together to Antioch, and remained there about a year, during which time they reaped a plentiful harvest of souls.

Martyrdom of St. James (Easter, A.D. 42).

The Churches of Judaea were not destined to enjoy a long repose. We learn from the Jewish historian Josephus that when Claudius became Emperor of Rome on the assassination of Caligula (A.D. 41), one of his first acts was to publish an edict wherein he confirmed to Herod Agrippa the kingdom, which Caligula had conferred upon him, and which embraced the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias. He, moreover, added to it all the country over which Herod the

Great, his grandfather, had ruled, which included Judaea and Samaria. It was under this Herod Agrippa that the second persecution broke out against the Church. He began by putting to death James, the brother of John; and seeing that this pleased the Jews, he apprehended Peter also, and cast him into prison, deferring his execution till after the Feast of the Pasch; for the arrest took place "in the days of the Azymes," and it was not usual for the Jews to put anyone to a violent death on a festival day. The faithful had recourse to prayer, and day and night did they earnestly petition the Almighty for the deliverance of their holy pastor.

Peter's deliverance by an angel.

Their prayer was heard; for the very night preceding the intended execution, while Peter, bound with chains, lay sleeping soundly between two soldiers, a bright light suddenly filled the prison, and an angel of the Lord stood beside Peter, and, rousing him from sleep, bade him arise quickly. That instant the chains dropped from the Apostle's hands, and after putting on his sandals and girding his garments about him, he followed the angel, who led him past the first and the second ward, and through the iron gate, which opened of itself, into the street, when the angel immediately disappeared from his sight. Peter all this time seemed to be in a dream; but when he became sensible that it was not a vision that he had seen, he said to himself: "Now I know indeed that the Lord hath sent His angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

The faithful surprised to see Peter free.

Peter at once repaired to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was surnamed Mark, where many of the disciples were assembled for prayer. He knocked at the door; and when a girl named Rhode came to answer the call and recognised

Peter's voice, instead of opening the door at once, she ran back full of joy to announce the glad tidings to the assembled disciples. So incredible did her story appear that they thought her bereft of her senses; but when she still affirmed that it was indeed Peter, they whispered: "It is his angel." Meantime, Peter continued knocking. At length they opened the door; and when they found that it was he in very truth, they too were amazed and transported with joy. Peter motioned them to be silent, and recounted how God had brought about his deliverance from prison. He desired them to inform James* and the brethren of his miraculous escape out of the power of Herod, that they might see the effect of their prayers for him. He then retired to another place, that he might not rashly expose himself to further danger.

Peter's guards punished.

In the morning there was no small confusion among the guards when they found the doors of the prison closely secured, but their prisoner gone. Herod examined them, but discrediting their story, took signal vengeance on them, ordering them to be put to death for their supposed neglect of duty.

Death of Herod Agrippa.

Some two years after this (A.D. 44), the Tyrians and Sidonians, who had fallen under the displeasure of Herod, sent messengers to Caesarea to ask him for peace. Elated by their submission, he arrayed himself in his royal purple, and from his judgment-seat addressed the Caesareans. Wishing to flatter him, the people applauded him, and cried out: "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." Herod took the impious homage as his due, and his heart swelled with pride; but that instant an angel of the Lord struck him. A loathsome disease seized him: he was eaten up by worms, and expired. Josephus relates that, when Herod saw he must die, he replied to the flatteries of the

* James the Less, cousin of our Lord and Bishop of Jerusalem.

people: "See, he whom you call a god is snatched out of life in spite of himself. The necessity of suffering death proves the falsity of your words; but we must submit to the will of God."

The famine breaks out (A.D. 44).

On the death of Herod Agrippa, Judaea again passed under the Roman government, and Fadus was made Procurator. He was succeeded by Tiberius Alexander. It was under these two Procurators, Josephus tells us, that in Judaea happened the great famine already foretold by the prophet Agabus and his companions, during which Helena, Queen of Adiabene, and a Jewish proselyte, came on a visit to Jerusalem to worship in the Temple. She was moved with pity for the sufferers, and had great quantities of corn sent from Alexandria and dried figs from Cyprus, which she caused to be distributed among those that were in want. Saul and Barnabas, too, came from Antioch to Jerusalem, carrying with them the collection made by the Christians of Antioch for the relief of the distressed in Judaea.

After fulfilling their mission to Jerusalem, Saul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, taking with them John, surnamed Mark. This John Mark is supposed to be the same person as Mark the Evangelist, a cousin of Barnabas, and son of Mary, in whose house the Apostles generally assembled at Jerusalem.

NOTE.—The rest of the Acts is chiefly taken up with events connected with St. Paul's ministry.

CHAPTER LXII

FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL WITH BARNABAS (A.D. 45)

Acts XIII.

"Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee" (Ps. liv. 23).

"Behold I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation even to the farthest part of the earth" (Isa. xlix. 6).

Consecration of Paul and Barnabas.

BEFORE entering upon their great missionary work among the Gentiles, both Saul and Barnabas, although chosen by the Holy Ghost for the ministry, were to be ordained and consecrated by men. Soon after their return from Jerusalem to Antioch they were, by a particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost, separated from among a number of brethren for a special work; for, as we learn, in the Church at Antioch were many prophets and teachers,* among them being Barnabas, Simon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manahen the foster-brother of Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. And as these were ministering to the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: "Separate Me Saul and Barnabas for the work to which I have taken them." Then, fasting and praying, they imposed their hands on them and sent them away. In this way God's ministers were, and are still, ordained.

It is commonly believed that to this period—the eve of his departure for his first missionary journey—belongs one of those supernatural visits vouchsafed to St. Paul by our Lord to prepare and strengthen him for the mighty work

* Men Divinely inspired to declare the truths of God—pastors who possessed the gifts necessary for the government of the Church.

to which he was here called. Writing of this rapture and revelation, he says, speaking of himself, not for his own praise, but for the advantage of the Corinthians: "I know a man in Christ, whether in the body* I know not, or out of the body I know not, God knoweth, such an one was caught up to the third heaven.† And I know such a man . . . that he was caught up into paradise, and heard words which it is not granted to man to utter. . . . And lest the greatness of the revelations should puff me up, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me; for which thing I thrice besought the Lord that it might depart from me. He said to me: 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in infirmity.' Gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Cor. xii.).

Paul's raptures and revelations.

After their ordination, Saul and Barnabas, taking with them John Mark as a subordinate minister, proceeded to Seleucia, the port of Antioch, at the mouth of the Orontes, and thence set sail for Salamis, in the east of Cyprus.‡ From Salamis they traversed the island in a westerly direction till they came to the seaport of Paphos. Though sent especially to the Gentiles, wherever they went they first preached the word of God to the Jews in their synagogues, following the order our Lord Himself had prescribed (Acts xiii. 46).

Cyprus.

* He knew not whether, for some moments, his soul was separated from his body, or in what manner he saw God.

† The Hebrews distinguished three different heavens. The *first* comprised the air, the clouds, etc., as far as the fixed stars. The *second* included all the fixed stars. The *third* was the abode of the angels, in which God disclosed His infinite glory. The first is called in Scripture simply the heavens, the second the firmament, and the third the heaven of heavens (Calmet).

‡ "Barnabas, who was so intimately connected by ties of kinship and common origin with the Jews of this island, took a leading part in this ministry, and became the Apostle of Cyprus, whither he returned later on, after his separation from Saul" (Abbé Fouard).

At Paphos was the residence of the Roman Proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man, who, hearing of the truths preached by Saul and Barnabas, invited them to his residence. The glad tidings of the Gospel deeply impressed him, and he would have embraced the faith at once, had it not been for a Jewish sorcerer, named Bar-Jesus or Elymas, who did all in his power to dissuade the consul from accepting it.

Sergius Paulus.

Then Saul, filled with the Holy Ghost, thus indignantly rebuked Elymas for his wickedness: "O thou full of all guile and of all deceit, son of the devil, enemy of justice, thou dost not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord. And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." At that moment Elymas was struck blind, nor could he any longer find his way without someone to guide him by the hand. By God's power, Elymas thus lost the sight of his eyes, while by His grace the eyes of Sergius were opened to the light of faith. Without further delay he expressed his readiness to believe, and embraced the doctrine of Jesus Christ. His conversion doubtless proved a great incentive to the spread of the faith in the island. After this we always find the great Apostle of the Gentiles spoken of as Paul, a name which some think was given him out of respect for his illustrious convert, Sergius Paulus; while others are of opinion that the Hebrew name Saul was changed into Paul to make it more acceptable to the Greek and Roman ear.

Elymas, the magician.

Paul and Barnabas next set sail for the coast of Pamphylia, and proceeded to Perge, a city situated some seven miles from the coast, on the river Cestrus. It was here that Mark, affrighted perhaps by the difficulties and dangers of the journey, or prompted in part by a wish to rejoin Peter and the other

Paul and Barnabas go to Perge.

Apostles in preaching in Palestine, left his companions and took his departure for Jerusalem. After staying a short while at Perge, the two Apostles crossed the Taurus range into the wild highlands of Pisidia and Lycaonia. To reach Pisidia, it was necessary, with much danger and many hardships, to journey over passes infested with robbers, and liable to be swept by mountain torrents. It is probably to this journey, and to what befell at the end of it, that St. Paul refers when he tells us that he was "in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from his own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils from false brethren" (2 Cor. xi. 26).

Antioch in Pisidia.

Arrived at length at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas entered the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath-day, according to their custom, and sat down. After the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue invited them to speak if they had anything to say to the assembled brethren. Paul rose up, and having motioned for silence, delivered a long discourse, the first of which we have any record. He told them of the doctrine and Divinity of Jesus Christ, without, however, saying anything that could offend or exasperate them as Jews. On the contrary, he spoke honourably of them, that thus he might gain them over to the Christian faith. In particular he commended David, whose Son they knew the Messias was to be, speaking of him as a man according to God's own heart, who, in all things that pertained to the true worship of God, fulfilled the will of God. "Of this man's seed," he continued, "God, according to His promise, hath raised up to Israel a Saviour, Jesus—John preaching before His coming the baptism of penance to all the people of Israel." He then brought forward the testimony which John the Baptist had given of Jesus, as it was likely that many of them had heard of John and

of the great esteem that all the people had for his virtue and sanctity. He told them that salvation was offered and sent to them by Jesus; that the people of Jerusalem and their rulers, not knowing Him nor the voices of the Prophets read in their synagogues every Sabbath, had fulfilled them in condemning Him; that they had obtained of Pilate a sentence that He should be crucified, but that God had raised Him up the third day; "and we publish to you this promise, the Messias, promised to our forefathers." He showed them that Jesus was indeed the Messias, the Son of God, begotten of the Father from all eternity; and to prove to them that His body should never become corrupt in the grave, he quoted from the Psalms: "Thou shalt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. xv. 10). These words, he went on to prove, could not apply to David himself; "For David," he said, "after he had served in his generation, according to the will of God, slept, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. But He whom God hath raised from the dead saw no corruption. Be it known, therefore, to you, men, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is preached to you. Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken by the Prophets: 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you will not believe if any man shall tell it you'" (Hab. i. 5).

As Paul and Barnabas rose to leave the synagogue, they were requested by the assembly to speak to them again on the same subject on the following Sabbath. And when the meeting broke up, many, both of the Jews and of the strangers who served God, followed them, and were exhorted by them to continue in the grace of God.

On the next Sabbath almost all the people of the city, not only Jews, but a great many Gentiles also, flocked

to the synagogue to hear the word of God. But the rulers of the synagogue, moved with envy at seeing the numerous conversions made by Paul's preaching, began to raise up a disturbance against him, and at last their opposition was such as to cause Paul and Barnabas to declare their determination to preach to the Gentiles the Gospel which they in their blindness rejected. "To you," they said, "it behoves us to speak first the word of God; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles; for so the Lord commanded us: *I have set thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be for salvation unto the utmost part of the earth.*"

Jealousy of the Jews.

Hearing this, the Gentiles were filled with joy, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were pre-ordained by the free election and providence of God to eternal life, and faithfully corresponded with His call, believed; and the word of God was published throughout the whole country. This success exasperated the Jews beyond measure. They rose up against Paul and Barnabas; and even the Jewish proselytes, among whom were many women of rank and station, so vied with the Jews in giving vent to their feelings of animosity that together they succeeded in driving them out of their territories. But Paul and Barnabas, shaking off the dust from their feet against them, as Jesus had commanded, went to Iconium, a town situated to the west of Lycaonia.

The Apostles expelled from Antioch.

CHAPTER LXIII

FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL WITH BARNABAS (*continued*)—THEY PREACH AT ICONIUM, LYSTRA, AND DERBE—RETURN TO ANTIOCH

"Blessed is he who hath the God of Jacob for his Helper, whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them" (Ps. cxlv. 5, 6).

Iconium.

ALTHOUGH obliged by persecution to leave Antioch, the Apostles went on their way rejoicing that the good seed which they had sown was destined to bring forth a plenteous harvest: "They were filled with joy and the Holy Ghost." At Iconium, also, they began their work by preaching in the synagogue, and many, both Jews and Greeks, embraced the faith.

Hostility of the Jews.

But here again unbelieving Jews stirred up persecution against them by arousing disaffection among the Gentiles. Yet, in spite of all the efforts of their enemies to oust them from the city, they continued at Iconium for some considerable time, "the Lord giving testimony to the word of His grace by many miracles." At length the whole city was divided into two factions, one of which sided with the Apostles, while the other was wishful to stone them to death. Hearing of these hostile intentions, Paul and Barnabas sought safety in Lystra, a city lying to the south-east of Lycaonia, about fifty miles from Iconium.

At Lystra Paul healed a man who had been a cripple from his birth. He had noticed him while he was preaching; and when he perceived, whether by Divine inspiration or by what he saw in his face or actions,

that he had faith to be healed, he called to him with a loud voice: "Stand upright on thy feet!" At once the man sprang up and walked.

At Lystra Paul cures a cripple.

Those who were witnesses of this astounding miracle were struck with awe, and believing that Paul and Barnabas must be more than human, they cried out in their native tongue: "The gods, in the likeness of men, are come down to us." Barnabas, doubtless because he was the taller of the two and of finer stature, they fancied to be Jupiter; while Paul, who says of himself that he was in bodily presence weak, but who was possessed of great eloquence, they took for Mercury, the messenger of the gods.

Straightway the priest of Jupiter brought oxen crowned with garlands before the city gate, and, surrounded by a great concourse of people, was about to offer them in sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas. But they, filled with alarm, rent their garments in grief, and ran among the people, exclaiming: "O men, why do ye these things? We also are mortals, men like unto you, preaching to you to be converted from these vain things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea, and all things that are in them; who in generations past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." He then went on to show them that, inasmuch as the Gentiles had always the light of reason, they were able, from the created things of this world, and from the visible effects of God's providence, to come to the knowledge of the true God, the Creator of all things; and that God had not left them without the means of discovering the way which led to Him: "He left not Himself without testimony, doing good from heaven, giving rains and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Even with all this it was with difficulty that the people were restrained from sacrificing to them.

Paul and Barnabas regarded as gods.

Paul stoned.

But the zeal of many to pay them reverence was soon to be carried to the opposite extreme. Some of their former Jewish persecutors, who had come from Antioch and Iconium, stirred up the minds of the people against the Apostles, and roused them to such a pitch of frenzy that they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city for dead. His disciples gathered round his apparently lifeless body, but were rejoiced after a little while to see him give signs of animation.

Paul and Barnabas reach Derbe.

He was soon so far recovered as to be able to enter the city, and next day he and Barnabas left Lystra and went to Derbe, a town situated on the borders of Lycaonia and Cilicia; and here they made many converts.

They retrace their steps.

They had now reached the farthest limit of their proposed journey, and from this point began to retrace their steps through the districts they had previously visited, through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; "for," said they, "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." In each Church they chose certain elders; and when, after enjoining a season of prayer and fasting, they had ordained them priests, they commended the faithful to God in whom they believed. From Antioch they passed through Pisidia and Pamphylia to Perge; thence to the port of Attalia, where they embarked for Seleucia, and returned to Antioch in Syria, from which city they had set out. This missionary journey is supposed to have occupied a period of some four years.

CHAPTER LXIV

CONTROVERSY RESPECTING THE GENTILE CONVERTS—THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM, A.D. 50

Acts XV.

"In that day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen; and I will close up the breaches of the walls thereof, and repair what was fallen; and I will rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all nations, because My Name is invoked upon them, saith the Lord who doth these things" (Amos ix. 11, 12).

A dissension about circumcision.

At Antioch a difficulty was raised by many Pharisaic converts from Judaea as to whether those who had been converted from Paganism could be saved, unless they were circumcised, and observed the other ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, thus reviving the question which had been settled more than twelve years before in the case of Cornelius. The point to be resolved, then, was this: "Before becoming a Christian was it necessary to become a Jew?" Paul and Barnabas, who vigorously opposed the Jewish converts in these contentions, were deputed with Titus and others, in consequence of a Divine revelation (Gal. ii. 2-4), to undertake a journey to Jerusalem, to consult the Apostles and the Church of Jerusalem upon the controversy. Such confidence had Paul in the correctness of the opinion he defended, and so convinced was he that the converted Gentiles were not subject to the Jewish Laws, that he would not suffer Titus, who had been a Gentile, to be circumcised.

From the example given us by Paul and Barnabas, Apostles, and men full of the Spirit of God, we learn that, as often as any contest arises about faith, recourse should be had to the supreme visible authority established by

Jesus Christ. This is the order of Divine providence with regard to the Church, as, without it, truth and unity could not be preserved; without it, the Church of God would be more defective and insufficient than any human government: "Tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt. xviii. 17).

Paul and Barnabas go to Jerusalem.

Setting out from Antioch, Paul and Barnabas were accompanied on their way by many of the faithful; and as they passed through Phoenice and Samaria, they related, to the great joy of all the brethren, the conversion of the Gentiles. Arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the Church, and by the Apostles and the elders, and declared how great things God had done in their regard.

Council of Jerusalem. St. Peter's words.

In this, St. Paul's third visit to Jerusalem, he met for the first time the Apostle St. John, who, with St. James and St. Peter, happened to be in the Holy City at this very time. The question in dispute being stated, it was examined and discussed by the Apostles and elders assembled for the purpose. St. Peter, as President of the Council and as Primate of the Church, after listening to the arguments on both sides, rose up to decide the point of doctrine, and reminded them that long ago the principle at issue had been settled by his mission to Cornelius to open the kingdom of Christ to the Gentiles: "Men, brethren, you know that in former days God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, gave them testimony, giving the Holy Ghost to them as well as to us, and made no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Why, he asked, should they tempt God by calling in question what He had sufficiently attested and proved, and

by doubting His promises of giving salvation to all nations?

St. James speaks.

Although he spoke with great modesty, no one gainsaid his words, and the cause now seemed to be settled, and the point of doctrine decided. St. James, as Bishop of Jerusalem, in whom the Jewish converts had the greatest confidence, is the only other Apostle who is reported as speaking. He stood up and pointed out that this revelation which had been made to Peter was in accordance with the words of the Prophets, as it was written: "After these things I will return, and will rebuild the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and I will rebuild the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the rest of men may seek after the Lord, and all nations upon whom My Name is invoked, saith the Lord who doth these things" (Amos ix. 11, 12). "Wherefore," continued St. James, "I judge that they who from among the Gentiles are converted to God are not to be disquieted; but that we write to them that they refrain themselves from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."

Abstinence from things strangled, and from blood.

In these prohibitions, to abstain from things strangled, and from blood, the Church had regard to the particular feelings of the Jews, that the bond of union between them and the Gentiles might be strengthened, the latter in these two instances giving way to the prejudices of the former, who in their turn gave up much by submitting to the abolition of the ceremonial law of Moses. But these prohibitions were only temporary, and were designed especially to bring the Jews more easily to admit of the society of the Gentiles. They were to cease with the reasons that gave rise to them.

The discussion was brought to a close, and the controversy finally adjusted by the decree of the Council pro-

nounced in these words: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things: That you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which things keeping yourselves, you shall do well."*

The decree of the Council.

This was the first General Council held in the Church, and served as the model for all succeeding ones. In it the Apostles, in an authoritative manner, laid down the law which was to be the guide of the faithful, knowing that they had a right to impose any regulation in the Church, and that they could only use their power for good, seeing that they were directed by the unerring Spirit of Truth which Christ had promised should remain with His Church for ever.

The model of General Councils.

Letters containing the resolutions of the Council, and greetings "from the Apostles and ancients and brethren to the brethren of the Gentiles that are in Antioch and in Syria and in Cilicia," were entrusted to Silas and Judas, surnamed Barsabas, who occupied a foremost rank among the brethren at Jerusalem, and who were chosen to accompany Paul and Barnabas on their return; and when the faithful in Antioch had been gathered together they delivered the epistles to them, and also confirmed their contents by word of mouth. All experienced great consolation in the promulgation of the decision, receiving it as the resolve, not of mortal men, but of the Holy Ghost.

The resolutions sent to Antioch.

In writing to the Galatians of this visit to Jerusalem, St. Paul says: "I communicated to them" (*i.e.*, the other

* This decree regarded only those converts who had been Gentiles. They were not forbidden to use the Jewish ceremonies, but a declaration is made that they were under no obligation to follow the said ceremonies and precepts.

Apostles) "the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, and they had nothing further to add. But, on the contrary, when they saw that to me was committed the Gospel of the Uncircumcision, as that of the Circumcision had been confided to Peter,* and when they recognised the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Circumcision. They only recommended us that we should bear in mind the poor, which same thing also I was careful to do."

The approval given to Paul's preaching.

Judas and Silas, who ranked among the Prophets, comforted the brethren at Antioch with their words, and strengthened them in the faith; and when the time came for them to depart, they were bidden return in peace to those who had sent them. Silas, however, continued some time at Antioch—where Paul and Barnabas also resumed their labours—and gradually identified himself with Paul's little band of workers.

Judas and Silas.

* St. Paul does not mean that his teaching differed from that of St. Peter, but refers to the different manner in which he and St. Peter were employed. It was judged better that St. Peter should preach chiefly to the Jews, who had been the elect people of God, and that St. Paul should be sent to the Gentiles; yet both of them preached both to Jews and Gentiles.

CHAPTER LXV

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL, WITH SILAS AND TIMOTHY (A.D. 51-54)—THE GOSPEL IS CARRIED INTO MACEDONIA AND GREECE

Acts XV.-XVIII.

"Be converted to Me, and you shall be saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is no other. . . . For every knee shall be bowed to Me" (Isa. xlv. 22, 24).

Contention between Paul and Barnabas.

After remaining a short while at Antioch, Paul proposed to Barnabas that they should revisit the brethren in all the cities wherein they had preached the word of the Lord, to see how it fared with them. But when Barnabas suggested that his kinsman John Mark should go with them, there arose a disagreement between them, Paul representing to Barnabas that, as Mark had left them on their former journey, so it was not fitting that he should be chosen to accompany them now. As they could not agree, Paul separated from Barnabas, and chose Silas as his companion. The estrangement was but of short duration. Later, in his Epistles, we find Paul mentioning Mark with affection and respect: "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for the ministry" (2 Tim. iv. 11). Again, in his Epistle to Philemon he speaks of "Marcus, my fellow-labourer." Writing also to the Colossians, he mentions him with gratitude as among the few faithful ones who at that time "were my helpers in the kingdom of God, and who have been a comfort to me" (Col. iv. 10, 11).

Meanwhile, after Paul had chosen Silas, Barnabas,*

* This is the last mention of Barnabas in the Acts, but he is referred to afterwards by Paul in his Epistles.

with John Mark, sailed for Cyprus, his native land; and thus, out of a passing dispute did good arise, seeing that it gave occasion to two Apostolic missions instead of one. From Antioch Paul, with his companion Silas, proceeded by land through Syria and Cilicia, visiting the cities in which he had already preached the word of God, confirming the Churches there, and commanding the precepts of the Apostles and the ancients to be observed. From Cilicia they crossed the mountains into Lycaonia, and visited once more Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium.

Timothy.

It was at Lystra that Paul met Timothy, a convert of high repute, who had probably been converted on St. Paul's first visit, and whom, owing to the representation of the people of Lystra and Iconium, he ordained (2 Tim. i. 6), and associated with himself as disciple and companion during the remainder of this journey. Timothy's father was a Gentile, but his mother, Eunice, was a Jewess; and his grandmother Lois had carefully taught him from a child to know the Holy Scriptures.

Timothy circumcised by Paul.

Though the obligation of keeping the Old Law regarding Circumcision had ceased, still was it lawful to observe the Jewish ceremonies: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but [the one thing necessary is] the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Cor. vii. 19). That he might not, therefore, obstruct the conversion of the Jews, but rather that he might more easily win them over, Paul circumcised Timothy, who, as we have seen, was a Jew on his mother's side, that thus he might make him more acceptable to them. If he had refused to circumcise Titus in order to vindicate the Christian's independence of the Mosaic ceremonies, he now submitted to the observance of them to show his willingness to conciliate his countrymen when no question of principle was at stake. As an

uncircumcised Jew, it would be impossible for Timothy either to speak in the synagogues or to associate with the Jews.

They reach Alexandria Troas.

Wherever he went, Paul ordered the new converts to receive as their rule of conduct the ordinances of the Apostles and priests assembled in Jerusalem. With Silas and Timothy, he passed through Phrygia and the country of Galatia, where he would seem to have been detained by a sharp attack of a malady to which he was subject: "You know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel to you heretofore" (Gal. iv. 13). They were, however, forbidden by the Holy Ghost to go and preach at this time in Lesser Asia.* Why this was we know not. It may have been that the people of this country were not prepared to receive the Gospel, or that the preaching of the Apostles in Macedonia was more necessary, or perhaps that these provinces were reserved for St. John, as Bithynia was for St. Luke. They crossed the eastern border of Mysia, and attempted to go into Bithynia, "but the Spirit of Jesus"—*i.e.*, the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from the Father and the Son—"permitted them not"; whereupon they went to Alexandria Troas, which is in the north-west of Asia Minor, and borders on the Aegean Sea.

Vision of the man of Macedonia.

Here Paul had a vision. During the night there appeared to him a man of Macedonia beseeching him: "Pass over into Macedonia and help us." Most interpreters regard this as the guardian angel of the province under the form of a Macedonian, who implored Paul's pity in behalf of the province he guarded.

At this point, for the first time, the narrative changes from the third person to the first, and the author of the

* This term was more generally applied to the maritime provinces of Asia bordering on the Aegean Sea.

Acts appears as one of the actors in his own narrative, and reckons himself as one of Paul's companions. It is hence inferred that St. Luke joined Paul at Troas; and, as the first person disappears again at the end of the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, and is not resumed till the fifth verse of the twentieth chapter, it is supposed that St. Luke remained at Philippi and in its neighbourhood, preaching the Gospel during the time that elapsed between this and their departure from Philippi six years later, having rejoined the Apostle at that place on his last missionary journey. "As soon as *we* had seen the vision," continues the narrative, "immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, being assured that God had called *us* to go to preach the Gospel to them. Therefore, sailing from Troas, we came with a direct course to Samothracia, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence [by the great Roman road] to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a [Roman] colony: and we were in this city some days conferring together."

Paul is joined by St. Luke.

As there was no synagogue at Philippi, on the Sabbath-day Paul and his companions went outside the city gates to the Proseuk, or Place of Prayer, situated on the bank of a river, where he knew the Jews assembled for worship. These oratories were often nothing more than mere enclosures situated near the sea or on the banks of streams, whence the Jews might procure water for their different purifications. On this occasion only a few women were gathered together for prayer, amongst whom was a Jewish proselyte named Lydia, a native of Thyatira in Asia Minor, and a seller of purple. She is described as a God-fearing woman. To this humble congregation Paul made known the Gospel, "to which Lydia listened; and the Lord opened

Conversion of Lydia at Philippi.

her heart to attend to the things which were spoken by him." After she and all her household had been baptised, "she besought us, saying: 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and there remain.' And she constrained us."

Paul and Silas scourged and imprisoned.

It chanced that on a certain day as they went to the Place of Prayer, they met a slave-girl possessed of a pythonical or divining spirit, who pretended to foretell things to come. By her soothsaying she had become a great source of profit to her masters. Following Paul and his companions, she cried out: "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who show you the way to salvation." This she continued to do for many days. Grieved for the unhappy creature, Paul turned and said to the spirit: "I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to go out of her." The evil spirit obeyed the voice of God's minister; but when her masters saw that their source of gain was gone, they caused Paul and Silas to be apprehended and brought before the magistrates, accusing them of having disturbed the city and of preaching what was not lawful for them as Romans to receive or observe. Moved by the cries of the populace, the magistrates had them stripped, beaten with rods, and cast into prison. The jailer, moreover, who had been charged to guard them securely, thrust them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Conversion of the jailer.

At midnight Paul and Silas were heard by the other prisoners praying and praising God, when suddenly there was a great earthquake, and the foundations of the city were shaken. The doors were immediately thrown open, and everyone's bonds were loosened. Aroused from his sleep, and seeing the doors of the prison open, the jailer concluded that the prisoners had made their escape; and, expecting to be put to death as being answerable for them, he drew

his sword to kill himself. In alarm Paul cried out to him: "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." The man called for a light, and in fear and trembling fell down at the feet of Paul and Silas. Leading them from their place of confinement, he asked: "Masters, what must I do that I may be saved?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus," they answered, "and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." After he had been instructed in what he was to believe and do, he washed the wounds of the two prisoners, and he and his family were baptised. He then brought them into his dwelling, "where he laid the table for them, and rejoiced with all his household, believing God."

The magistrates apologise to Paul.

At daybreak the magistrates sent their sergeants, or lictors, to the prison with instructions that the Apostles were to be released. But Paul said to them: "After having whipped us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans,* they sent us to prison; and now do they thrust us out privately? Not so; but let them come, and they themselves send us out." On being told this, the magistrates were filled with fear and alarm at the thought that not only had they done an unlawful act in scourging a Roman citizen, but had even scourged them without giving them an opportunity of defending themselves. Trembling now for their lives, they hastened to ask pardon of Paul and Silas, and betrayed the utmost anxiety to show them every deference. They even begged them as a personal favour to depart from the city, for fear lest they should be involved in further troubles. Before taking their departure, however, they went to Lydia's house to see and comfort the brethren. Paul was pleased thus to vindicate his honour and to avert

* Cicero says: "To bind a Roman citizen is an outrage; to scourge him, an atrocious crime; to put him to death, almost a parricide; but to crucify him——"

the scandal which the new converts would naturally feel in seeing their master treated as a criminal.

Paul and Silas now proceeded on their way through Macedonia, apparently leaving Timothy for a little while, and Luke for a much longer period, to build up the newly founded Church, with the aid, probably, of a chosen body of elders.

CHAPTER LXVI

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL (*continued*)—HE PREACHES TO THE THESSALONIANS AND THE BEROEANS—HIS DISCOURSE TO THE ATHENIANS

Paul at Thessalonica.

From Philippi Paul and Silas next directed their journey along the coast in a south-westerly direction to Thessalonica (the modern Salonika), by way of Amphipolis and Apollonia. For three successive Sabbaths Paul went into the synagogue at Thessalonica, where, according to his custom, he opened the Scriptures and argued with the Jews from the Law and the Prophets. The sufferings of Christ formed their great stumbling-block to acknowledging Him as the Messias. But Paul showed them from the Scriptures that the Prophets had marked out His sufferings as the chief characteristics of the Redeemer to come, and that the other signs of the Messias which they had given were to be found in Christ. The substance of his argument was the same as that of our Lord Himself, when on His way to Emmaus. He concluded with the words: "This is Jesus the Christ, whom I declare to you." His preaching led many Greek proselytes and women of the highest rank, but few Israelites, to embrace the faith.

During his stay at Thessalonica Paul supported himself

by the work of his own hands, as we gather from his First Epistle to the Thessalonians: "For you remember, brethren, our labour and toil: working night and day, lest we should be burdensome to any of you, we preached among you the Gospel of God" (1 Thess. ii. 9). The Church at Philippi, as we gather from his Epistle to the Philippians (iv. 15, 16), also contributed to relieve his wants: "When I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated to me, as concerning giving and receiving, but you only; for unto Thessalonica, also, you sent once and again for my use." And he tells them that their charities were "*an odour of sweetness, an acceptable sacrifice well pleasing to God*" (v. 18).

How Paul supported himself.

Paul was not destined to remain long undisturbed anywhere. A number of envious Jews of Thessalonica, "taking with them some wicked men of the vulgar sort, and making a tumult, set the city in an uproar." The mob expected to find Paul and Silas in the house of one named Jason, and beset the house. But when their search proved vain, they dragged Jason and some of the brethren before the magistrates of the city. With great artifice they suppressed the true cause of their vexations against the Apostles, and changed a mere question of religion into one of temporal policy. They accused them of raising up a new power in opposition to Caesar's: "Those who disturb the whole world," they said, "are come hither also; whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus." The magistrates were perplexed, but allowed Jason and his companions to go after they had given a satisfactory answer, and promised not to do anything contrary to the peace of the city.

Riot stirred up by the Jews.

As the position of Paul and Silas had now become one of great danger, the brethren immediately sent them

away under cover of night to Beroea. In flying from the face of persecution in due season, St. Paul followed the instruction and example of his Divine Master. When his labours were unsuccessful in one place, he renewed them in another; and wherever he went, his object was always the same—to announce the truth first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles.

Paul and Silas depart for Beroea.

At Beroea, Paul found the people in general of a more noble and generous disposition of mind than those of Thessalonica, and less given to envy and malice. They received the word with all eagerness, "daily searching the Scriptures," *i.e.*, those places of the prophecies by which St. Paul proved that Jesus was the Messias. It was a great comfort to them thus to find, even as St. Paul had said, that Christ was God, and that, after being crucified, He had risen, and ascended into heaven; which things, after his explanations, they now understood, although in the past they had read them and heard them read every Sabbath, without being able to penetrate their meaning. But when certain Jews of Thessalonica learnt that Paul was preaching the word of God at Beroea, they came thither for the sole purpose of exciting the populace against him. The brethren, however, succeeded in safely conducting him to the nearest seaport, probably Dium, whence he set sail for Athens, after leaving word for Silas and Timothy, who would appear to have rejoined him either at Thessalonica or Beroea, to follow him with all speed.

Paul at Beroea.

While awaiting them at Athens, Paul was moved to see the city given up to idolatry. He disputed in the synagogue with the Jews and the proselytes, and, like Socrates of old, discoursed every day in the market-place with those who would listen to his words. He held disputations with the teachers of the

Athens. "To the unknown God."

different philosophic schools, chiefly with the Epicureans and the Stoics, the latter of whom believed in the immortality of the soul, but, in common with all other pagan philosophers, denied the resurrection of the body. Some of them asked concerning Paul: "What is it that this babbler would say?" while others, because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection, answered: "He seemeth to be a publisher of new gods." They brought him to the Areopagus, the supreme and most famous tribunal of ancient Athens, held on the hill of Mars, where he was desired to explain himself at greater length. "May we know," they said, "what this new doctrine is which thou speakest of? for thou bringest certain new things to our ears." "Ye men of Athens," replied Paul, "I perceive that you are in all things, as it were, too superstitious; for, passing by, and seeing your idols, I found an altar on which was written: To the Unknown God. What, therefore, you worship without knowing it, this I preach to you."

Sermon of St. Paul at Athens.

Some are of opinion that this altar was designed for the worship of any god, of any nation, who had not come to their knowledge; or of that great God hinted at in the writings of Plato; or, as others conjecture, for the worship of the God of the Jews, of whom they might have heard such wonders, and whose name the Jews themselves declared to be unknown and ineffable. However, from this inscription, St. Paul took occasion, with wonderful dexterity, with sublime reflection, and with that solid eloquence of which he was master, to inform and instruct them concerning the works of the one true God, of whom they had little knowledge. He taught them that it was this one true God who had made the world and all things in it; that from one man He had raised all mankind; that His presence was not confined to temples made by the hands of men, but that He was everywhere, and in all creatures, preserving them every

moment; that in Him we live, and move, and subsist; that it was He who determined the time, limits, or bounds of every empire and kingdom, and of every man's life; that this true God, who made, preserves, and governs all things in heaven and on earth, could not be like gold, silver, or anything made by the art or fancy of man. He put them in mind that, even according to one of their own poets, Aratus, men themselves were the offspring of God, and were blessed with a being and a knowledge above all other creatures in the world, and that by the light of reason they ought to seek God, and, by considering the effects of Providence over the world and the creatures in it, come to a knowledge of this one God, the Author of all; or, at least, to an imperfect knowledge of Him, as men find out things by groping for them in the dark.

He then went on to show them how, after permitting men for many ages to run on in this ignorance and blindness in punishment of their sins, the same true God had been pleased to call upon all men to acknowledge and worship Him henceforth, to repent, and to do penance for their sins. God, he continued, had appointed a day for judging every man with equity by the Man Jesus Christ, His own Son, whom He had chosen to be their Judge; and by raising His Son from the dead had given sufficient proofs of the truth that everyone shall rise again from the dead.

When the Athenians heard Paul speak of the resurrection of the dead, a thing which, even to the most philosophic among them, seemed impossible, some of them laughed and made a jest of it, while others promised that they would hear him on this question another time. Dionysius,* the Areopagite, how-

Dionysius, the Areopagite.

* Tradition makes Dionysius the first Bishop of Athens. It is he who, observing the convulsions of Nature, which paid homage, as it were, to its God expiring on the cross, and not knowing their cause,

ever, one of the most distinguished of the Council, and its president, together with a certain woman named Damaris and others, was converted and believed.

CHAPTER LXVII

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL (*continued*) — HE FOUNDS THE CHURCH OF CORINTH, GOES TO EPHESUS, AND THENCE TO JERUSALEM

Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth.

DEPARTING from Athens, Paul next visited Corinth, where he met with a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who, with his wife Priscilla, had lately come there from Italy owing to a decree of the Emperor Claudius banishing all Jews from Rome. They had more than likely been converted to Christianity by St. Peter, who, we know from tradition, visited Rome about A.D. 40, and founded the Church there. As we have already noted, every Jewish boy was taught a trade by which he might gain his livelihood. The neglect of this duty on the part of parents was thought to be as bad as teaching him to steal. Nor was St. Paul an exception to the rule. At Corinth he remained with Aquila; and because, like him, he was a tent-maker by trade, they worked together, the Apostle submitting to this labour that he might not be a burden on those to whom he preached the Gospel. Here, too, he followed his usual practice of going on the Sabbath-days into the synagogue to expound the doctrine he had come to teach, "testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ."

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is said to have exclaimed: "Either the universe is falling to ruin, or the God of Nature must be suffering."

Arrival of Silas and Timothy at Corinth.

With the arrival of Silas* and Timothy at Corinth from Macedonia, Paul's position was materially altered for the better, and he was enabled to give himself up more earnestly to the preaching of the Word. From the Churches of Macedonia they brought with them generous offerings which henceforth freed him from pressing temporal cares, and to which we find him subsequently referring in one of his epistles: "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was burthensome to no man; for that which was wanting to me, the brethren supplied who came from Macedonia; and in all things I have kept myself without being a burthen to you, and so I will keep myself" (2 Cor. xi. 9). He won over to the faith some of the Jews and some of the Greeks, but from the Jews in general he met with bitter opposition. They contradicted and blasphemed him, till at last he shook his garments, as on a former occasion at Antioch he had shaken off the dust from his feet, to testify that they were guilty of their own perdition. "Your blood be upon your own heads," he said; "I am clean: from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles." Departing thence, he went to a house adjoining the synagogue, belonging to a certain man named Titus Justus, a worshipper of the true God. Crispus, however, the ruler of the synagogue, was converted by Paul's preaching, and both he and many of the Corinthians were baptised.

Among the converts were Erastus, the treasurer of the city, and Caius, who made his house the meeting-place of the Church, and at St. Paul's second visit received him as a guest. Out of respect for Caius and Crispus, and for the household of Stephanas, the Apostle departed from his general rule of never administering baptism with

* No further mention is made of Silas in the Acts. He is honoured in the Church as a Saint, and he, as well as St. Barnabas, obtains the title of Apostle. Tradition represents him as the first Bishop of Corinth.

his own hands, and baptised them himself. Others of his converts were Tertius, who wrote the Epistle to the Romans under the Apostle's dictation; Quartus, whom he classes in the same rank as Caius and Erastus; Fortunatus, Achaicus, and Chloë, a prominent female convert.

Paul encouraged by a revelation.

One night when, owing to the opposition of the Jews, Paul was thinking of bearing the Gospel message elsewhere, the Lord appeared to him, and said: "Fear not, but speak, and hold not thy peace, because I am with thee; and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city." In obedience to this injunction of our Saviour, Paul remained there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among the people of Corinth and in the neighbouring districts. It was during this time that he wrote his two Epistles to the Thessalonians.

Gallio.

The Roman Proconsul of Achaia at this time was Gallio, brother of Nero's preceptor, the great philosopher Seneca, and uncle of the poet Lucan. The Jews, enraged against Paul, dragged him before Gallio's judgment-seat under the charge "that this man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the Law." When Paul was about to speak in his own defence, Gallio abruptly terminated the proceedings with these words: "If it were some matter of wrong, or a heinous deed, you men, O Jews, it would be reasonable I should bear with you; but if they be questions of a word and of names,* and of your Law, look you to it: I will not be judge of such matters." With that he stopped the case; while the Corinthian spectators fell upon Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and with blows forced him away when he refused either to desist in his purpose or to retire; "but Gallio cared for none of these things."

*The Jews were enraged that Jesus should be called the Christ.

Paul's vow.

Paul stayed yet some time in Corinth before taking leave of the brethren and sailing for Syria, with Aquila and his wife. At Cenchra, or Cenchreae, the eastern port of Corinth, "he shore his head, for he had a vow." This was probably the Nazarite vow, during the performance of which it was necessary for the one who had taken it to abstain from wine and strong drink, and not to let a razor pass over his head or his face. Should the one who had made the vow be absent from the Holy City at the end of the period required for the fulfilment of his vow, he was bound to preserve the locks then cut from his head until his arrival at Jerusalem, when he had to take them to the Temple and burn them there. If Paul had taken such a vow, we should have an explanation of his desire to go to Jerusalem at this time; and desire to show his gratitude for the Divine protection would furnish ample reason for making it.

Ephesus.

From Cenchreae, Paul sailed with Aquila and Priscilla to Ephesus, situated over against the island of Samos, and famous for its temple of Diana, which was one of the seven wonders of the world. Tradition makes Ephesus the city in which our Lady and St. John resided, although it is more commonly believed that our Lady died, not at Ephesus, but at Jerusalem, and that St. John only went to Ephesus after that event. We learn also from tradition that St. Timothy was the first Bishop of this city. Here Paul went into the synagogue, and so won the attention of those who heard him that they requested him to stay longer with them. This he could not do at the time; but after promising to come back to them again, he embarked for Caesarea in Palestine, whence he proceeded to Jerusalem for the Feast, probably the Feast of Pentecost, and for the sake of visiting the Church there. He seems to have made no lengthened stay at Jerusalem before he went down to Antioch in Syria, and there termi-

nated his second missionary journey, which had lasted three years.

Apollos.

After St. Paul's departure from Ephesus, there arrived there a certain Alexandrian Jew named Apollo, or Apollos, who had been a disciple of John the Baptist. He was an eloquent and learned man, well versed in the Scriptures, yet had received only the baptism of John. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and "taught diligently the things that are of Jesus." When we consider the great harvest of souls, and the few labourers, and the small time that the Apostles could spend in any one place, we shall not be surprised that this zealous convert should not yet be perfectly instructed in every doctrine of Christianity. Aquila and Priscilla heard him speak in the synagogue, and after his discourse was over, asking him to come with them, they expounded to him more exactly the way of the Lord. As he was desirous to go to Achaia, the brethren at Ephesus recommended him to the Church at Corinth, where, on his arrival among them, he encouraged those whom Paul had already converted, besides "vigorously convincing the Jews in public, showing, by the Scriptures, Jesus to be the Christ."

CHAPTER LXVIII

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL (A.D. 54-58) — THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED AT EPHESUS—TUMULT OF THE SILVERSMITHS

Acts XIX.-XXI.

"O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people; for His mercy is confirmed upon us, and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever" (Ps. cxvi.).

After a stay of some considerable time at Antioch, St. Paul started on his third missionary journey, proceeding

by land through Syria, and passing through Cilicia, Galatia, and Phrygia, to Ephesus. Apollos had already gone to Corinth when Paul reached Ephesus.

Paul baptises some disciples of John the Baptist.

On his arrival at Ephesus, Paul found there twelve men who apparently had been disciples of St. John the Baptist, and who, from his testimony, believed in Christ, but had received no further instruction, nor any baptism but John's. To Paul's inquiry whether, since they believed, they had received the Holy Ghost they answered: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost": by which, doubtless, they meant that they had not heard whether the Holy Ghost had yet come down upon the disciples, since John himself had taught that Christ would baptise in the Holy Ghost. "In what, then," asked Paul, "were you baptised?" On their answering, "In John's baptism," he said: "John baptised the people with the baptism of penance, saying that they should believe in Him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus." They thereupon requested to be baptised with the baptism of Jesus, a request to which Paul gladly acceded. After they had been baptised he imposed hands on them; and the Holy Ghost coming down upon them, "they spoke with tongues and prophesied."

The establishment of the Church at Ephesus.

For three months Paul spoke boldly in the synagogue concerning the kingdom of God, until the opposition of his enemies forced him to quit the synagogue and withdraw with his disciples to the school of one Tyrannus, a man probably learned in rhetoric and philosophy. There, for two years, Paul discoursed daily, so that the knowledge of the Christian faith was spread widely around Ephesus.

The testimony of St. Paul was confirmed by many wonderful miracles. "Even there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons" (such as he had

used while working), "and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them." Need we wonder, then, if God continues to work miracles by the relics of martyrs and saints to testify to the sanctity of His servants, and to encourage others both to give them a reasonable honour and to imitate their lives?

Miracles wrought by St. Paul.

Now, among the Jews were exorcists, who, by calling upon the name of the true God, are thought to have been able sometimes to cast out evil spirits. When these men saw Paul cast out devils by calling upon the name of Jesus, they wished to do the same, though they did not believe in Jesus Christ. Among them were the seven sons of Sceva, a chief priest; and when, on one occasion, they tried thus to cast out a spirit, they were assailed with the words: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know: but who are you?" Then, straightway, the possessed man leaped upon them and overpowered two of them so that they were fain to escape naked and wounded from the house, even at the expense of bringing ridicule upon themselves for their woeful failure. After this, fear fell upon the people of Ephesus, both Jews and Gentiles, "and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." Many came to Paul confessing their sins, while others brought their books of divination and magic and burnt them publicly, the price of the books burnt amounting to a great sum. Thus did the work of God triumph.

The seven sons of Sceva.

About this time St. Paul made known his intention of making a further journey into Greece in consequence of what the Spirit had revealed to him. He proposed, as soon as he should have passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, adding: "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." Accordingly, as if to prepare the Mace-

Paul's plans for his journey.

donian and Achaian Churches for his visit, he sent two of his disciples, Timothy and Erastus, into Macedonia, but he himself remained for a time in Asia. It was from Ephesus that he wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians.

The tumult of the silversmiths.

During his stay at Ephesus there arose a great disturbance against him, the instigator of which was one Demetrius, a silversmith. This man was a maker of silver models of the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, a temple so magnificent that, as we have seen, it was regarded as one of the seven wonders of the world. The successful preaching of the Gospel threatened ruin to such men as Demetrius, who, out of the superstition of the people, pursued a profitable trade in making these portable models of Diana's shrine. We may gather how numerous had become the converts to Christianity at Ephesus from the words of Demetrius himself, when he complained bitterly of losing his trade as a maker of images owing to the zeal of the Apostle. Calling together his workmen, and such as followed the same occupation as himself, he thus harangued them: "You men, you know that our gain is by this trade: now you see and hear that this Paul by persuasion hath drawn away a great multitude, not only at Ephesus, but also throughout all Asia, saying: 'There are no gods which are made with hands'; so that not only is this our craft in danger to be vilified, but also the temple of great Diana shall be thought nothing of; yea, and her majesty shall begin to be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth."

By these words he succeeded in working up the feelings of his hearers to frenzy; and, as with one voice, they cried out: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Their cry was taken up through the whole city, and soon the streets were in the wildest uproar. Not finding Paul, the people laid hands upon his travelling companions, Gaius and

Aristarchus of Macedonia, and hurrying them along with them, rushed with one accord to the theatre. Paul would have entered the theatre also, but was prevented by his followers, who feared for the result of his thus exposing himself to the rage of a wild and infuriated mob.

The Jews, who had themselves drawn many from the worship of Diana, seeing that they were in the same danger from the silversmiths as were the Christians, put forward one of their speakers, Alexander, to plead their cause. With a gesture of his hand, Alexander beckoned for silence. For a moment he seemed likely to succeed in gaining a hearing; but no sooner did the crowd perceive that he was a Jew than they renewed the cry: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" and for two hours without intermission the shout was repeated, although the greater part of the mob knew not why they were met together.

Speech of the town clerk.

Fearing mischief, the town clerk or chief magistrate hastened to the scene of excitement, and, having won the attention of the people, thus addressed them: "Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great Diana, and of Jupiter's offspring? Seeing, therefore, these things cannot be contradicted, you ought to be quiet, and do nothing rashly; for you have brought hither these men neither guilty of sacrilege, nor of blasphemy against your goddess. But if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a cause against any man, the courts of justice are open, and there are Proconsuls. And if you inquire after any other matter, it may be decided in a lawful assembly, for we are in danger of being charged with this day's uproar, there being no man guilty (of whom we can give an account) of this concourse." The people were calmed by his words, and quietly dispersed.

CHAPTER LXIX

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL (*continued*) — HE PASSES THROUGH MACEDONIA AND GREECE

Soon after the tumult of the silversmiths, Paul called his disciples to him, and after earnestly exhorting them to perseverance, took leave of them, and set out for Macedonia by way of Troas. In passing through the northern part of Greece, he would again doubtless visit Philippi, Thessalonica, and Beroea, where "he exhorted the faithful with many words." He is even thought at this time to have penetrated as far as Illyricum on the Adriatic. At length he came into the southern part of Greece, into Achaia. Here, chiefly at Corinth, he abode three months, during which time he wrote his Epistle to the Romans.

Paul crosses into Greece.

The Apostle was anxious to visit Jerusalem, and had intended to sail direct for Syria, when the discovery of a Jewish plot to kill him caused him to return through Macedonia. From Beroea there accompanied him Sopater, Aristarchus of the Thessalonians, and many other companions, probably representatives of the different towns in which he had preached, carrying with them the money that had been collected for the poorer brethren in Syria. These crossed over to Troas before Paul, who would appear to have been rejoined at Philippi by St. Luke, as the narrative of the *Acts* is now continued in the first person: "These having gone before us, waited for us at Troas. But we sailed from Philippi after the days of the Azymes, and came to them to Troas in five days, where we stayed seven days."

A Jewish plot to kill Paul.

Paul raises Eutychus to life.

Even thus early the Christians seem to have observed the Sunday as a holy day. Paul and his disciples, we are told, were assembled "on the first day of the week to break bread," and on this, the eve of his departure, he discoursed with them, and continued to speak till midnight. The faithful generally met either after sunset or before daylight, as they were unable, for the most part, to withdraw during the day from their various occupations. On this occasion they had assembled in an upper chamber, lit up by a number of lamps, when the service was suddenly interrupted by an accident. A certain young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in one of the windows, overpowered with a heavy sleep as Paul was preaching, fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. This accident, which gave occasion to a great miracle, seems to have been ordained by the particular providence of God to confirm the preaching of St. Paul, and to fix more deeply in the hearts of his disciples the words of their beloved master who was just going to leave them. Paul went down to where the youth lay dead, and stretching himself over him, after the manner of Elias, raised him to life, to the great joy of the youth's friends. He then returned to the upper room, where he "broke bread," and continued discoursing until daybreak, when he took leave of them.

Paul's voyage to Miletus.

In the meantime, Paul had sent his companions by ship, bidding them sail to Assos, where he would meet them, as he himself purposed going there by land. From Assos, after Paul's arrival there, they all sailed to Mitylene, the capital of Lesbos, and thence next day to Chios. On the following day they sailed to Samos, and on the next day reached Miletus on the mainland. Paul did not intend to make any lengthened stay here, as his object was, if possible, to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem. He

accordingly sent to Ephesus for the ancients of the Church there to join him at Miletus; and when they arrived he thus touchingly addressed them:

Paul's address to the ancients at Miletus.

"You know, from the first day I came into Asia, in what manner I have been with you all this time, serving the Lord with all humility, and with tears and temptations which came upon me from the snares of the Jews; how I have discovered to you everything that can be profitable to your salvation, teaching you publicly and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and Gentiles penance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, bound in the spirit, I go to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, only that the Holy Ghost, in every city, witnesseth to me that chains and afflictions wait me there. But I fear none of these things." He then went on to express his belief that he should see them no more, judging it impossible that he would escape all the dangers that were prepared for him, and bade those who had been appointed ministers of the Gospel to take care, in the first place, of the salvation of their own souls, and, in the next place, of the salvation of the flock committed to their care. Especially did he enjoin this on the Bishops, placed as they were by Divine institution to govern the Church, or the Churches, under them. "I know," he solemnly continued, "that after my departure ravenous wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, keeping in memory that, for three years, I ceased not night and day with tears admonishing every one of you. And now I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, who is able to build up, and to give an inheritance among all the sanctified. You know, too, that such things as were needful for me, and for those that

are with me, these hands have furnished. I have showed you that, labouring in this manner, we must support the weak, and remember the word of the Lord Jesus, how He said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

After he had finished speaking, he fell upon his knees, and prayed with them for what all believed to be the last time. At the thought that they should see their father's face no more, they burst into tears, and, falling upon his neck, they kissed him, and with hearts full of grief and gratitude, accompanied him to the ship which was to convey him from their sight.

From Miletus to Tyre.

From this touching leave-taking Paul took the shortest route to Jerusalem in order to reach it in time for the great Feast. "We came," says St. Luke, "with a direct course to Coos, and the day following to Rhodes, and from thence to Patara. Here, having found a ship bound for Phoenice, we went aboard, and set sail. And when we had discovered Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand we sailed into Syria, and came to Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her burden."

From Tyre to Caesarea.

A week was spent at Tyre, where Paul met certain disciples, who would have dissuaded him from going to Jerusalem in view of the sufferings which they feared awaited him there. But he disregarded both their entreaties and the dangers which everywhere threatened him. "And the days being expired," continues St. Luke, "departing we went forward, they all bringing us on our way, with their wives and children, till we were out of the city; and kneeling down on the shore, we prayed. And when we had taken leave of one another, we took ship, and they returned home." Arrived at Ptolemais (*Acre*), Paul spent one day with the brethren there, and on the following day pro-

* We do not find these words in the Gospel. St. Paul probably received them from the Apostles.

ceeded, probably by land, to Caesarea, where, with his companions, he took up his abode for several days in the house of Philip the Evangelist,* one of the seven deacons. Philip had four virgin daughters, all of whom prophesied, and who are commonly supposed to have voluntarily embraced the state of virginity.

Prophecy of Agabus; journey to Jerusalem.

While St. Paul was staying with Philip, there came to him from Jerusalem that same prophet Agabus who had predicted the famine which occurred in the reign of Claudius. As soon as he entered the house, the prophet took Paul's girdle, with which he bound his own hands and feet, saying: "The man whose girdle this is, thus shall the Jews bind him in Jerusalem, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." "And when we had heard this," writes the author of the Sacred Text, "both we, and they who were of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. But Paul answered: 'What mean you, weeping and afflicting my heart, for I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus?' And when we could not persuade him, we ceased, saying: 'The will of the Lord be done.'" The little band then proceeded to Jerusalem, accompanied by an aged disciple named Mnason, from Cyprus, who had offered them a lodging in the crowded city. This was Paul's fifth visit to Jerusalem from the time of his conversion, and the last of which we have any mention. With it closes St. Paul's third missionary journey, the duration of which had been about four years.

* So called from his preaching his Gospel.

CHAPTER LXX

ST. PAUL IS APPREHENDED IN THE TEMPLE—PLOT AGAINST HIS LIFE

Acts XXI.-XXIII.

"And when he [Agabus] was come to us, he took Paul's girdle; and binding his own feet and hands, he said: These things saith the Holy Ghost: The man whose girdle this is, thus shall the Jews bind in Jerusalem" (Acts xxi. 11).

Paul's reception at Jerusalem.

Paul was welcomed with joy by the faithful in Jerusalem, and on the day following his arrival went to have an interview with St. James. He found him attended by all the ancients, and related what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. They glorified God for this, but recounted to him certain calumnies that had arisen against him. "Thou seest, brother," they said, "how many thousands there are among the Jews who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law. Now they have heard of thee that thou teachest those Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk according to the custom."

This accusation was false; for, as we have seen, he had neither commanded nor advised the Jews to whom he had preached to renounce the Law, abandon the ceremonies of Moses, or reject the ancient customs of the nation. He had never hindered anyone from following in this respect the bias of his inclination. He had, indeed, defended the liberty of the converts, as he had taught that Christ had freed them from the yoke of the ceremonial law. But he had left them at liberty to take it up if they pleased; for these things were not then to be sought after as necessary, nor yet to be condemned as sacrilegious. Soon after this, Paul was given a practical opportunity of refuting the charges brought against him.

The Nazarite vow.

It was deemed a meritorious act among the Jews to bear the expenses of an offering to be presented in the Temple in fulfilment of a vow which another had made; for, by doing so, it was believed that they became partakers in the vow. Now four men had bound themselves by the Nazarite vow; and, therefore, to reassure the Jewish converts who believed that he had led the Jewish believers among the Gentiles to abandon the Law of Moses, Paul, acting on the advice of St. James, conformed to the Law by joining in the exercises of purification of the four men, and by undertaking to pay the cost of the offerings that had to be made in the discharge of their vow, thus removing the suspicion with which they regarded him. The vow would have been accomplished in seven days; but when the time was drawing to a close, some Jews, who were from Asia, seeing Paul in the Temple, stirred up the people against him, and laying violent hands upon him, exclaimed: "Men of Israel, help! This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the Law, and this place; and, moreover, hath brought in Gentiles into the Temple, and hath violated this holy place." Their accusation was based simply on the fact of their having seen him in the city in the company of an Ephesian named Trophimus, whom they supposed he had brought into the Temple.

Paul dragged out of the Temple.

Their charge was quickly spread about; the whole city was soon in an uproar, and a rush was made to the Temple. Unwilling to defile the sacred precincts with blood, or to have it profaned by the presence of Gentiles, the people dragged Paul out of the Temple, and immediately shut the doors.

Word was at once conveyed to the Tribune, Claudius Lysias, who commanded the Roman garrison in Fort Antonia, that the city was in a turmoil. With a body of soldiers, the Tribune hurried to the scene of the

disturbance, and by his prompt action succeeded in overawing the rioters, and saving Paul from summary execution. Unable amid the confusion to gather who Paul was, or what he had done, he ordered him to be bound with chains and brought into the fort, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Agabus. As the soldiers with their prisoner approached the steps which led to the fort, so determined a rush was made by the baffled crowd to get Paul into their power that they were compelled to bear him in their arms to save him from the fury of the mob. When they saw him carried out of their reach, they cried out in their rage: "Away with him!" Just as they reached the top of the steps, Paul addressed the Tribune in Greek, and asked to be permitted to speak with him. Surprised at hearing Paul accost him in Greek, Lysias turned to him and asked: "Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian who before these days didst raise a tumult?" He had mistaken Paul for a certain Egyptian, who, in the thirteenth year of the Emperor Claudius, and more than three years prior to this event, came to Jerusalem, and calling himself a prophet, had persuaded as many as four thousand of the people to accompany him to Mount Olivet, pretending that, by a mere word, he would throw down the walls of the city. Felix, the Roman Governor, attacked the deluded multitude and killed four hundred of them. Their leader escaped, and was heard of no more. These rebels were called Sicarii, or Assassins, from *sica*, a small dagger, which they carried concealed under their cloak.

The Roman Tribune rescues Paul.

In reply to the Tribune's question, Paul answered: "I am indeed a Jew, a man of Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city, and I beseech thee permit me to speak to the people." The request was granted; and Paul, standing on the steps,

Paul permitted to address the people.

began to address them in their own tongue: "Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye the account which I now give you." Hearing themselves addressed in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect of their own country, they were astonished, and listened to him in profound silence.

This gave Paul the long-wished-for opportunity of addressing to the Jews a word in justification of his actions, of vindicating his teaching, and of proving his loyalty to the Law. He gave them a summary of his life as a Jew. He had been "born at Tarsus, in Cilicia, but brought up in the city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the truths of the Law of the fathers, zealous for the Law, as also all you are this day." He explained to them how he had proved his zeal by persecuting the Christians, to which the High Priest and the ancients could bear testimony; how, when on his way to Damascus, Jesus of Nazareth had appeared to him in a vision; and how Ananias, who interpreted the will of the Lord to him more fully at Damascus, and who was a man according to the Law, and bore a good character from all the Jews dwelling there, had said to him: "The God of our fathers hath pre-ordained thee that thou shouldst know His will, and see the Just One, and shouldst hear the voice from His mouth." He added, moreover, that the Lord had bidden him depart from Jerusalem because the people would not receive his testimony, and go unto the nations afar off.

The Jews enraged.

Now, when he told them that God had sent him to preach to the Gentiles, whom they could not bear to hear preferred before themselves, they interrupted him, and their fury burst out anew. "Away with such a one from the earth," they cried, "for it is not fit that he should live." They showed their rage by the most frantic gestures; and, unable to vent their wrath in a more effectual way, they threw dust into the

air, and against the object of their indignation. They even threw off their garments to show themselves ready to stone him.

Paul ordered to be scourged. The order recalled.

Lysias, who was ignorant of the language in which Paul had addressed his hearers, and who believed that he must have been guilty of some great offence to cause such a tumult, took him into the castle for examination, after first giving orders for him to be bound, scourged, and tortured. Paul suffered himself to be secured with thongs; but when they were about to scourge him, he calmly asked the centurion in command: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" The centurion in alarm hurried away to the Tribune and said: "What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman citizen." The Tribune came in all haste to Paul, and bade him tell him if he were indeed a Roman citizen. Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he said: "I obtained the being free of this city with a great sum": to which Paul answered: "I was born so." The Tribune was in fear, because he had caused Paul to be bound; for the same law which forbade a Roman citizen to be scourged also forbade him to be bound. Next day, then, on hearing that the charge against Paul was purely of a religious character, he had the chief priest and the Sanhedrim called together, and set Paul before them.

Paul brought before the Sanhedrim.

The Council was composed both of Pharisees and Sadducees, the latter of whom, as we have seen, denied the doctrine of the resurrection, while the former affirmed it, a circumstance which Paul turned to good account. "Men, brethren," he began, addressing the Council, "I have conversed with an entire good conscience before God until this present day——" Here he was rudely interrupted by the High Priest Ananias, who commanded those who stood near to

strike him on the mouth. Upon this, Paul exclaimed: "God shall strike thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou there to judge me according to the Law, and, contrary to the Law, commandest me to be struck?" In reply to some who asked him how he dared revile the High Priest of God, Paul made answer: "I knew not, brethren, that he is the High Priest; for it is written: Thou shalt not speak evil of the prince of thy people."

Whether Paul spoke ironically or not we cannot tell. He may have been implying that Ananias could no longer be High Priest, since the Mosaic Law, with its rites and ceremonies, was abolished. Or perhaps by his absence from Jerusalem he really did not know that Ananias was the High Priest, especially as the order of succession to the priesthood was at that time confused and irregular, being determined by favour of the Roman Emperor, or by purchase. Or, again, owing to his defective eyesight, Paul may not have recognised the command as coming from the High Priest; but, in the excitement of the moment, believing that it issued from other lips than those of the High Priest, he uttered a rebuke that would have applied to any member of the Council. Be this as it may, Paul's words were prophetic; for, but a few years later, Ananias was deposed by Felix, the Roman Governor, and murdered by the Sicarii.

Knowing the different dispositions of his judges, and the division that existed between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, Paul threw disunion into their councils by affirming: "I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees: concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." His declaring himself in favour of the belief in the resurrection of the dead incensed the Sadducees, but won him favour from the Pharisees. A dissension at once arose between the two parties, some of the Pharisees exclaiming: "We find no evil in this man."

So great was the clamour which arose that the Tribune deemed his interference necessary, and fearing lest Paul should be torn to pieces by them, ordered a guard of soldiers to bring him back to the castle for safety.

Our Lord appears to Paul.

That night Paul was comforted by a vision of our Lord, who stood by him, and bade him: "Be constant; for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou also bear witness in Rome."

Plot against Paul's life.

Meantime, his enemies were busy devising by what means they might compass his death. The morning had no sooner dawned than some forty Jews, probably Sicarii, to please the Sadducees, bound themselves by oath to kill Paul. They swore that they would neither eat nor drink till they had carried out their purpose, and called down the curse of God upon themselves if they did not remain true to their promise. They spoke of their resolve to the chief priests and the ancients, and desired them to ask the Roman Tribune to have Paul again brought before the Sanhedrim next day, when they would attack and slay him on his way from the castle. Their plan, however, was thwarted by the son of Paul's sister. Having received word of the diabolical plot against his uncle, the young man carried the information to the castle, where he was readily admitted, owing to his relationship with the prisoner.

The Plot thwarted.

Paul listened to his story; then, calling to him one of the centurions, he said: "Bring this young man to the Tribune, for he hath something to tell him." The Tribune received him with marked kindness, and, taking him by the hand, went aside with him and asked him privately: "What is it that thou hast to tell me?" He listened with attention and surprise to the young man's account of the plot, and, charging him to tell these things to no man, dismissed him. Lysias saw that no time was to be lost. Calling two centurions,

he bade them: "Make ready two hundred soldiers, that they may go as far as Caesarea, together with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, from the third hour of the night. And provide beasts, that they may set Paul thereon, and bring him safe to Felix the Governor."

Paul is sent to Caesarea.

The next morning saw Paul safe at Antipatris, from which place the foot-soldiers had been commanded to return, leaving the cavalry alone to convey him to Caesarea. This they succeeded in doing the same day. The Tribune had entrusted them with a letter to the Roman Governor at Caesarea couched in these terms: "Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent Governor, Felix, greeting. This man having been seized by the Jews, and ready to be killed by them, I rescued, coming in with an army, having understood that he is a Roman; and being desirous to know the cause which they objected to him, I brought him forth into the council: whom I found to be accused of questions concerning their Law, but to have nothing worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was told me that they had prepared an ambush for him, I sent him to thee, signifying also to his accusers to plead before thee. Farewell."

When Felix had read the letter, and had learnt from Paul himself that he was from the province of Cilicia, he promised to hear him as soon as his accusers should arrive. In the meantime he gave orders for him to be kept in custody in Herod's judgment-hall.

CHAPTER LXXI

PAUL BEFORE FELIX, THE ROMAN GOVERNOR

Acts XXIV.-XXVI.

"And you shall be brought before governors, and before kings, for My sake, for a testimony to them, and to the Gentiles" (St. Matt. x. 18).

Paul accused before Felix.

FIVE days after Paul's arrival at Caesarea, there came thither the High Priest Ananias, with some of the ancients, bringing with them one Tertullus, an orator or professional advocate, whom the Jews had engaged to put their case before the Roman Governor Felix.* The words addressed by Tertullus to Felix on this occasion, to win over to his side by praise the man whose judgment he sought, stand in marked contrast to the simple straightforwardness of Paul's defence. "Whereas," began Tertullus, "through thee we live in much peace, and many things are rectified by thy foresight, we accept it always, and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness." He then went on to speak of Paul as a pestilent man who raised up seditions among all the Jews throughout the whole world, and as the ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. He complained that when the Jews had apprehended Paul for having attempted to profane the Temple, and would have judged him according to their law, the Tribune Lysias had taken him violently out of their hands, and commanded them to go to the Governor of Judaea to plead their cause before him. After the Jews present had

* Felix had been a freedman of the Emperor Claudius. He had been made Governor of Judaea through the influence of the High Priest Jonathan. He ruled the country with great cruelty, exercising, says Tacitus, the power of a king with all the insolence and meanness of a slave who is restrained neither by fear nor shame.

expressed their assent to the charges adduced by Tertullus, Paul spoke thus in his own defence:

Paul's defence before Felix.

"Knowing that for many years thou hast been judge over this nation, I will with good courage answer for myself. For thou mayest understand that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to adore at Jerusalem, and neither in the Temple did they find me disputing with any man, nor causing any concourse of the people either in the synagogues or in the city; neither can they prove to thee the things of which they now accuse me. But this I confess to thee, that, according to the sect which they call a heresy, so do I serve the Father and my God, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, having hope in God, which these also look for, that there shall be a resurrection for the just and the unjust. Now, after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings, and vows, during which time they found me purified in the Temple, not with a crowd, nor with a tumult." He pointed out that the Jews of Asia who had found him in the Temple were not present as they ought to have been if they had any accusation to make against him. But he appealed to the ancients of the Jews who were then present, and challenged them to bring any charge against him, except that he had professed his belief in the resurrection of the dead.

Felix defers his decision.

Felix saw that there was no case against the Apostle. He also knew from the letter of Lysias that Paul and the Christians were not guilty of any offence against Caesar, but that all that was alleged against them related to the Jewish Law. Not wishing, however, to give offence to the Jews by at once setting Paul at liberty, he postponed the further hearing of the case till the arrival of Lysias in Caesarea, and kept the Apostle a prisoner in the hope of extorting

money from him. Yet he gave orders for him to be treated with great leniency, and for his friends to have free access to him.

Felix keeps Paul a prisoner two years.

At this time Felix had as his consort the adulteress Drusilla, a Jewess, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I., and wife of Azizus, King of Emesa. Both he and Drusilla, being anxious to hear more of his teaching, called Paul before them, "and heard from him the faith which is in Jesus Christ." The holy Apostle, as did the Baptist of old to Herod, spoke to them of justice and chastity. Both were terrified at the thought of the future judgment which he had put before them. His zeal to make them enter into themselves hurried him beyond the bounds of worldly prudence, but made such an impression as to disarm the indignation his discourse was calculated to produce. To deaden the voice of conscience, Felix interposed delay, and deferred his repentance to another time, saying to Paul: "For this time, go thy way; but at a convenient time I will send for thee." For two years he kept Paul a prisoner, and during that time often sent for him, and conversed with him, but with the sole motive of extracting from him a bribe as the price of his release.

Porcius Festus succeeds Felix.

We learn from Josephus how, in the following year, a great sedition arose in the city of Caesarea, between the Jews and the Syrians, concerning their equal right to the privileges belonging to citizens; "for the Jews claimed the pre-eminence, because Herod their King was the builder of Caesarea, and because he was by birth a Jew." The citizens did not deny this, but affirmed that Caesarea was formerly called Strato's Tower, and that there was then no Jewish inhabitant in it. From reproaches the two parties proceeded to acts of violence: stones were thrown, and on both sides many were severely wounded. When word of this was brought

to Felix, he came upon them suddenly and commanded them to desist. But the Jews were obdurate. They refused to pay heed to the words of Felix, who in the end gave orders to his soldiers to disperse them. Many of the Jews were slain, and many were taken prisoners, while the houses of the more wealthy were rifled. Felix was denounced to the Emperor Nero for countenancing this massacre, and was recalled to Rome to answer the charges brought against him by the Jews (A.D. 60). He was succeeded in his office by Porcius Festus. To win favour with the Jews, Felix left Paul a prisoner at Caesarea.

Paul brought before Festus.

On the arrival of the new Governor, the Jews took the opportunity of requesting that Paul be sent for trial from Caesarea to Jerusalem, their real object being to lay an ambush to kill him on the way. Festus, who three days after his arrival at Caesarea had gone up to Jerusalem, answered that Paul should be detained at Caesarea, to which place he ordered his accusers to accompany him, as it was his intention to return there in a few days. The day after his return to Caesarea, Festus commanded Paul to be brought before him, when, to the charges preferred against him by the Jews, which were many and grievous, Paul answered: "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the Temple, nor against Caesar, have I offended in anything."

Paul appeals to Caesar.

Willing, however, to gratify the Jews, Festus asked Paul whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before him. Paul answered: "I stand at Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews I have done no injury, as thou very well knowest. If I have injured them, or have done anything that deserveth death, I refuse not to die; but if there be nothing of these things whereof they accuse me, no man can deliver me to them: I appeal to Caesar."

This word "appeal," uttered by a Roman citizen, acted like a spell, and instantly stopped all further proceedings, since the Roman law declared those provincial Governors violators of the public peace who should strike, imprison, or put to death, a Roman citizen who appealed to the Emperor.

Festus receives a visit from Agrippa II.

As far as Festus was concerned, the case was now at an end, and it only remained to send Paul to Rome. In the meantime a form of indictment had to be drawn up to be sent to the Emperor, and this Festus found no easy task, unacquainted as he was with Jewish law. In his difficulty, however, he received aid from an unexpected quarter. There came to Caesarea at this time Agrippa II., King of Trachonitis and Abeline, accompanied by his sister Bernice, to offer his congratulations to the new Governor. After some days had been given over to festivity, the Governor mentioned the case of Paul to Agrippa, telling him that the Jews had adduced nothing against him except "certain questions of their own superstitions, and of one Jesus, deceased, whom Paul affirmed to be alive."

Defence before Agrippa.

Upon this, Agrippa expressed a desire to hear Paul; and on the next day, amid great pomp and ceremony, Agrippa and Bernice took their seats in the audience-hall, attended by the principal men of the city. Then Paul, chained to the soldier who guarded him, was brought before them, and was bidden by Agrippa to speak for himself. "I think myself happy, O King Agrippa," he began, "that I am come to answer for myself this day before thee, concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, especially as thou knowest all, both customs and questions, which are among the Jews." He first went on to appeal to the well-known strictness of his private life, and showed that he could not be accused of anything criminal. "My life," he

said, "from my youth, which was from the beginning among my own nation in Jerusalem, all the Jews do know." He next called attention to the hope of the promise which God made to their fathers, the hope of a Deliverer who was to conquer death. He had been led, he said, to recognise the fulfilment of the promise in Jesus of Nazareth, whose Resurrection he proclaimed to be the pledge of a new and immortal life. Was he, then, in thus being faithful to the traditions of his fathers, guilty of any great crime? "I stand under judgment for the hope of the promise which God made to our fathers, unto which our twelve tribes, serving night and day, hope to come. For which hope, O king, I am accused by the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" He proceeded to show that, like his accusers, he also had disbelieved in Jesus as the Messias, but told them of the manner in which he had been led to serve this same Jesus, whose followers he had till then so zealously persecuted.

He then gave a brief account of his conversion, which differed in no essential from previous accounts, except that here he made no reference to his blindness and baptism, and said that the Voice which he heard spoke in the Hebrew tongue. He spoke of the commission which our Lord gave him to the nations, "to open their eyes, that they might be converted from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sin, and a lot among the saints by the faith that was in Him. Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not incredulous to the heavenly vision."

He showed that the only thing urged by the Jews for compassing his death was in exact conformity with Moses and the Prophets. These had taught men that the Messias should suffer and die, and should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light to the

people and to the Gentiles. Could it, then, be accounted to him as a crime that he had endeavoured to the utmost of his power to carry out the commission given to him in a vision from heaven, a vision so real and unmistakable as to change him from a persecutor of the Christians into an ardent Apostle?

Here Festus interrupted him, exclaiming loudly: "Paul, thou art beside thyself: much learning doth make thee mad!" "No," said Paul, "I am not mad, most excellent Festus; but I speak words of truth and sobriety; for the king knoweth of these things, to whom also I speak with confidence; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for neither were any of these things done in a corner. Believest thou the Prophets, O King Agrippa? I know that thou believest." Agrippa answered: "In a little thou persuadest me to become a Christian." "I would to God," said Paul, "that both in little and in much not only thou, but all that hear me this day should become such as I am, except these chains."

Effect of Paul's words.

At this point Agrippa and the Governor, with their company, went aside for a while to confer together, and came to the conclusion that Paul had done nothing that merited death or imprisonment, Agrippa remarking: "This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Caesar." But an appeal once made to the Emperor could not be withdrawn.

CHAPTER LXXII

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME—HE IS SHIPWRECKED (A.D. 60)

Acts XXVII.

"Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Caesar: and behold God hath given thee all them that sail with thee" (Acts xxvii. 24).

Paul sets sail.

The ship in which St. Paul sailed from Caesarea was a coasting vessel of Adramyttium, a town on the coast of Mysia, over against the island of Lemnos. Together with other prisoners, he was put under the care of Julius, a centurion of the Augustan cohort, who had orders to conduct him to Rome. The holy Apostle was greatly comforted by having in his company St. Luke and his beloved and devoted fellow-traveller, Aristarchus of Thessalonica, who had accompanied him from Macedonia, and who was to share his imprisonment at Rome (Col. iv. 10). The incidents of the voyage are given by St. Luke minutely, and with all the vividness and accuracy of detail of a keen and intelligent eye-witness. His story, almost verbatim, is as follows:—

Sidon.

We weighed anchor from Caesarea, and on the following day touched at Sidon, where, by the courtesy of Julius, Paul was permitted to visit his friends, who bestowed upon him their affectionate care.

Myra.

When we launched again from Sidon, we sailed under the east coast of Cyprus, owing to contrary winds, and directing our course over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, came to Myra, in Lycia, where the centurion found an Alexandrian corn-ship sailing for Italy, and put us aboard her.

When for many days we had sailed slowly as far as Gnidus, the adverse wind compelled us to run down to

Crete; and after rounding Cape Salome, we reached with much difficulty the harbour of Good Havens, near to which port stands the city of Thalassa (*Lasea*). As navigation had now become dangerous, for it was past the season of the great Jewish Fast (*the Day of Atonement*),* we remained here for a long time. Paul now spoke words of comfort and of advice, saying: "Ye men, I see that the voyage begins to be with danger and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives." But the centurion preferred the judgment of the pilot and the master of the ship to the suggestions of Paul. And, whereas Good Havens was not a commodious harbour to winter in, the majority counselled sailing thence, in the hope that we might reach Phenice and pass the winter there. Now, Phenice is a haven of Crete, sheltered alike both from the north-west and the south-west winds.

Gnidus to Crete.

Favoured by a gentle south wind, they believed they had obtained their purpose, when, without a moment's warning, a tempestuous wind from the north-east, called Euro aquilo (*Euro-clydon*), off Mount Ida, swept down upon us, and rendered the ship unmanageable. Giving up the ship to the winds, we were driven before the gale. While running under the island of Cauda (*Clauda*), the sailors had much difficulty in hoisting the boat on board. This done, they used helps, that is, they undergirded the ship by passing strong cables and chains round the hull that she might not be torn asunder; and fearing lest they should be driven into the quicksands, or the Great Syrtis, off the coast of Africa, they let down the sail-yard, and so were driven before the wind. Next day, for the purpose of lightening the ship, they threw overboard all that could be spared; and, on the following day, the sailors, with the

The storm. For fourteen days the ship is tempest-tossed.

* See vol. i., p. 142.

help of the passengers, cast out with their own hands the tackling of the ship. For many days neither the sun nor the stars appeared to give us an idea of our position; and, as the storm continued to rage, all hopes of safety were abandoned.

Paul's vision.

In the general alarm and danger, all, for a long time, had gone without food, when Paul, standing in the midst of them, spoke thus: "You should indeed, O ye men, have hearkened to me, and not have put off from Crete to have suffered this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but only of the ship; for an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, stood by me this night, saying: Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, behold, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall so be as it hath been told me. But we must come into a certain island."

The life-boat is sacrificed to keep the crew.

On the fourteenth night after our departure from Clauda, as we were sailing about midnight in the Adria, the sea stretching from Crete and Western Greece to Malta and Sicily, the sailors, whose practised ears would probably detect the sound of breakers, deemed they discovered some country, and proceeded to take the soundings. They found that we were in twenty fathoms of water, which, after we had gone a little further, diminished to fifteen. Then, fearing lest we should be driven upon the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern, "and wished for the day." It was now that the sailors, under the pretence of casting out more anchors from the prow, but in reality with the intention of rowing off and leaving the ship and the passengers to their fate, began to lower the boat into the water, when Paul, who divined their real purpose,

interposed, and drew the centurion's attention to their new danger: "Unless these men stay in the ship," he said, "you cannot be saved." The soldiers on board immediately cut the ropes by which the boat was being lowered, and allowed it to fall into the sea and drift away into the darkness.

There were altogether two hundred and seventy-six souls; and as soon as the day began to break, Paul again tried to cheer his fellow-voyagers, saying: "This is the fourteenth day that you have waited and continued fasting; wherefore I pray you to take some food for your health's sake; for there shall not a hair of the head of any of you perish." Having spoken thus, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of them all, broke it, and began to eat. They were all of better cheer, and they also took some food. Thus refreshed, the men set to work to lighten the ship by casting overboard her cargo of wheat; and, as it was broad daylight, we could see the land over against which we had cast anchor. At first we did not recognise what land it was; but when we saw what appeared to be a creek or bay with a smooth shore,* it was resolved, if possible, to run the ship into it. Accordingly, the anchors were weighed, the lashings with which the rudder had been secured were unloosed, the mainsail was hoisted to the wind, and, steering for the creek, they tried to beach the ship.

They determine o run the ship on shore.

By thus driving her direct for the shore, the prow remained fast and immovable in the yielding beach, but, owing to the violence of the wind and the sea, the stern began to break up; for what had been mistaken for a creek was, in reality, the entrance to a narrow strait, "a place where two seas met," and the

The shipwreck.

* Now St. Paul's Bay, in Malta. Modern travellers, following in the *Acts* the description of the breakers and of the twenty fathoms of water and then fifteen, have been able to identify the land which the ship first sighted as Koura Point.

strong seas running through this narrow channel from the north thus proved too much for the ill-fated vessel.

Every soul is saved.

Fearing that their prisoners might try to escape by swimming ashore, the Roman soldiers who guarded them wished to kill them on the spot; but the centurion, anxious to save Paul, prevented them from carrying out their barbarous design. He gave orders that those who were able to swim should first plunge into the sea and make for the land, while the rest, by making use of planks and portions of the wreck, followed after; and so it came to pass that every soul got safe to land.

CHAPTER LXXIII

PAUL REMAINS THREE MONTHS IN MALTA—SAILS FOR ROME (A.D. 61)

Acts XXVIII.

"In My name . . . they shall take up serpents" (St. Mark xvi. 18).

Paul unhurt by a viper's bite.

When we had escaped, continues St. Luke, then we knew that the island was called Melita (*Malta*); but the barbarians (*strangers*) showed us no small courtesy, for, having kindled a fire because of the rain that was falling, and of the cold, they afforded us what comfort they could. Paul, who was helping to gather sticks, was in the act of placing a bundle on the fire, when a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened on his hand. Now, when the natives saw the beast hanging on his hand, they said one to another: "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, who, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth him not to live." But when they saw Paul quickly shake his hand

over the fire, and the venomous reptile fell into the flames, they waited for a time, thinking that he would begin to swell from the bite and drop down dead. Seeing, however, that no harm was done to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

Paul cures the father of Publius.

Now, Publius, the chief man of the island, who had his estates in the neighbourhood, received us, and for three days entertained us courteously. It chanced, too, at the time, that the father of Publius lay ill of a fever and dysentery; but Paul, praying and laying his hands on him, cured him. The fame of this miracle spread throughout the length and breadth of the island, so that all who had diseases came and were healed. In gratitude for the favour conferred upon them by Paul, the people paid us many honours, and when we were to set sail, loaded us with such things as were necessary.

Voyage from Malta.

After a delay of three months, Julius placed us on board a ship from Alexandria that had wintered in the island, a ship whose sign was the *Castors* (*i.e.*, the figure-head of the ship represented *Castor* and *Pollux*). We sailed first to Syracuse, in Sicily, where we remained three days; then, coasting, we reached Rhegium, a town in Italy, situated on the Straits of Messina. We waited at Rhegium for a day; and on the next day, favoured by a fair south wind, we came to Puteoli, a harbour on the north of the Bay of Naples, at which the Alexandrian corn-ships discharged their cargoes. Here we met with some of the brethren, at whose request (and with the consent of the Roman centurion) we remained seven days before proceeding to Rome. News of our arrival having reached Rome, many of the brethren came out to meet us as far as *Apii-Forum* and the *Three Taverns;* and when Paul saw them "he gave thanks to God, and took courage."—

Arrival in Rome (A.D. 61).

On their arrival in Rome, Paul and the prisoners were handed over probably to the Praetorians. Their Prefect at that time was the famous Afranius Burrus, who, possessed then of some influence over Nero, used it in endeavouring to repress his evil inclinations, and in directing his councils with wisdom. Still guarded by a soldier, to whom he was fastened with a chain from his wrist, Paul was allowed to dwell in his own hired house. There, after three days, he assembled the principal Jews then to be found in Rome. No doubt the Jews had returned to Rome after the death of Claudius, who had banished them, but who had died seven years before Paul's arrival there.

Paul's interview with the Jews.

In his address to the Jews Paul spoke of the cause of his having been delivered up a prisoner into the hands of the Romans, and told them that it was not as the accuser of his nation, but as the hope of Israel, that he was bound as he was. It was for this cause, therefore, that he desired to confer with them. They replied that they had neither received letters from Judaea concerning him, nor had any of their brethren coming thither spoken any evil of him; but they requested to know what was his opinion of the Christians, "for as concerning this sect," they said, "we know that it is everywhere contradicted."

The Jews reject Paul's word.

A day having been set apart for hearing him, the Jews came in great numbers to his lodging; and he taught them, "testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, out of the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening." Upon the greater number, however, his words were lost; and when, disputing with one another, they were on the point of departing, he applied to them the words of the Holy Ghost spoken by the prophet Isaias: "With the ear you shall hear, and shall

not understand; and seeing, you shall see, and shall not perceive: for the heart of this people is grown gross, and with their ears have they heard heavily, and their eyes they have shut; lest perhaps they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Isa. vi. 9, 10). "Therefore is it," continued Paul, "that "this salvation is sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it."

Paul in prison two years (A.D. 61-63).

As it was necessary for a prosecution that the accusers should attend in person, and as none appeared for some time, we find that Paul for two whole years remained in his own hired lodgings,* where he was permitted to receive all who came to him: "And he preached the Kingdom of God, teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with confidence."

Subsequent movements of St. Paul.

Here terminates the history of St. Paul as contained in the Acts of the Apostles. The other actions of this great Apostle are, from want of records, involved in much obscurity, but they are to some slight extent traceable in his Epistles. From the testimony of certain ancient writers we learn that, after an imprisonment of two years, his trial came on, probably before the Emperor Nero himself, and resulted in his being set at liberty. After his acquittal he seems to have gone to Spain, and later, by way of Macedonia, into Asia Minor. He afterwards visited Crete in company with Titus, whom he left to organize the Church there. He revisited Miletus and Ephesus, at which latter city he left Timothy, and went by way of Philippi to Corinth. After spending a winter at Nicopolis, he passed

* Chained to the soldier who guarded him, Paul was comforted by the society of some of his most devoted disciples, whose names we find mentioned in his Epistle to Philemon. These were Luke, Timothy, Ephaphras, John Mark, Aristarchus, and Demas.

through Macedonia, crossed over to Troas, and revisited Ephesus, where, according to some, he was arrested and again carried a prisoner to Rome. Others are of opinion that his arrest took place at Nicopolis. This time he was not detained in honourable confinement, but, up to the time of his death, was treated as a criminal. After his first examination in Rome, expecting soon to be condemned to death, he would seem to have felt deserted and solitary, as Luke was the only one of his former associates by his side. It was at this time that he wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, entreating him to come to him without delay, and bring Mark with him. It was as though he sought the comfort of their company in his last hours.

Martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul (A.D. 67).

In this letter he writes: "I am even ready to be sacrificed, and the term of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. For the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to me at that day." Tradition has it that, after the burning of Rome, he was ordered to be put to death, and that, on account of his being a Roman citizen, he was beheaded. About the same time, and during the same persecution, St. Peter was crucified in Rome with his head downwards. Their martyrdom, which is kept by the Church on the 29th June, took place A.D. 67. As St. Paul's epitaph, we may cite what he once said of himself to the Corinthians: "I am the least of the Apostles, who am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace in me hath not been void" (1 Cor. xv. 9, 10).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I. The Five Historical Books—viz., the *Four Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles*.
II. The Fourteen Epistles of St. Paul—viz., *ten* to various Churches and *four* to particular persons.
III. The Seven General or Catholic Epistles.
IV. The Apocalypse.

The Order of the Twenty-seven Books.

St. Matthew.
St. Mark.
St. Luke.
St. John.
The Acts.
St. Paul to the Romans.
,, ,, Corinthians (1).
,, ,, Corinthians (2).
,, ,, Galatians.
,, ,, Ephesians.
,, ,, Philippians.
,, ,, Colossians.
,, ,, Thessalonians (1)
,, ,, Thessalonians (2).
St. Paul to Timothy (1).
,, ,, Timothy (2).
,, ,, Titus.
,, ,, Philemon.
,, ,, the Hebrews.
St. James.
St. Peter (1).
St. Peter (2).
St. John (1).
St. John (2).
St. John (3).
St. Jude.
The Apocalypse.

Thus, besides the *Gospels*, which contain the history of Christ, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, which contain the history of the infant Church, we have the *Epistles of the Apostles and the Apocalypse*. Of the Epistles fourteen were written on particular occasions by St. Paul, ten of them being addressed to different Churches, and four to individuals. The Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude are called *Catholic Epistles*, because they are addressed to all Christians in general, if we except the Second and Third Epistles of St. John.

The Epistles of St. Paul contain admirable advice, and explain fully several tenets of Christianity. In them we learn that to please God *faith* is essential; that this faith is but *one*, as God is but *one*; and that faith which shows itself not by *good works* is dead.

St. Peter (2 Pet. iii.) assures us that there were some in his time, as there are many in our days, who misconstrued St. Paul's Epistles, as if, for instance, he required no good works after baptism, maintaining that faith alone would justify and save man. Yet St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, positively asserts: "If I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge; *and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing*" (xiii. 2). He, moreover, recommends a firm adherence to the Church as the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. iii.).

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, though placed first, is not the first Epistle in the order of time, either because of the dignity of the chief Christian Church, or of its importance and sublime contents. At the time of writing it St. Paul had not been in Rome, but was at Corinth preparing to go to Jerusalem with the charitable contributions and alms collected in Macedonia and Achaia for the relief of the poor Christians in Judaea and at Jerusalem, probably in the spring of A.D. 58. The Apostle's chief design was not only to unite all the new Christian converts, whether Jews or Gentiles, in the same faith, but also to bring them to a union in charity, love, and peace; to put an end to the disputes and contentions among them, occasioned particularly by those zealous Jewish converts, whose intention it was to oblige all Christians to the observance of the Mosaical precepts and ceremonies. He shows them that neither the Jew nor the Gentile had reason to boast, but that both alike ought to humble themselves under the hand of God, the Author of their salvation. He reminds the Jews that they could not expect to be justified and saved merely by the ceremonies and works of their Law, though good in themselves; that the Gentiles as well as they were now called by the pure mercy of God; that they were all to be saved by believing in Christ and complying with His doctrine; and that sanctification and salvation can only be had by the Christian faith and the practice of Christian virtues.

Romans.

The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus, probably in A.D. 57, in answer to a letter received from them containing information of divers disputes and divisions among them. The object of this Epistle, however, was twofold. Its main design was to take away divisions among them, and to settle various matters in regard to ecclesiastical discipline. In it he also treats of matrimony, of the state of continency, of sins against chastity, of meats offered to idols. He speaks of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, of the different gifts of the Holy Ghost, and how to employ them; and of faith in the Resurrection.

1 Corinthians.

St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians was also written in A.D. 57 from Macedonia a few months after the first, and both were written before his Epistle to the Romans. In it he congratulates those who were now reformed through his previous admonitions. Forced to justify himself and his teachings against false teachers, he gives an account of his sufferings, and of the graces and favours bestowed upon him by God, and treats of the dignity of God's ministers.

2 Corinthians.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians seems to have been written from Ephesus in A.D. 55, and to have had the same object as that to the Romans. The Galatians were Gauls by origin, being descended from those who pillaged Delphi in the third century B.C., and who crossed from Thrace into Asia Minor, where they settled between Cappadocia and Phrygia. Soon after St. Paul had preached the Gospel to them, they had been corrupted by Judaizing teachers, who required all Christians, even those who had been Gentiles, to observe circumcision and the other ceremonies of the Mosaic Law. He defends his Apostolic authority, having been called by Christ Himself, and gives a valuable summary of his own life. He shows that his doctrine was that of the other Apostles, who, at the Council of Jerusalem, more than four years before, had testified to their exemption from the legal observances: "If justice be by the Law, then Christ died in vain" (Gal. ii. 21).

Galatians.

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians was written from Rome, probably during his first imprisonment, A.D. 62. The chief design of this Epistle was to hinder the Ephesians and others in the neighbouring cities from being seduced by false teachers who were coming among them.

Ephesians.

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, also written during his first imprisonment at Rome, A.D. 63, testifies his most tender gratitude and acknowledgment for the assistance they had sent him, and the most ardent zeal for their salvation. He recommends charity, unity, and humility, and warns them against false teachers, whom he styles enemies of the Cross of Christ.

Philippians.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians was written during the earlier part of his imprisonment at Rome, probably A.D. 61 or 62. The Christians of Colossae, a city in the south of Phrygia, were also in danger from the Judaizing teachers, so that the exhortations and doctrine contained in this Epistle are similar to those set forth in his Epistle to the Ephesians.

Colossians.

The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians was the first of his Epistles in the order of time, and was written from Corinth, A.D. 52. It was written to confirm and comfort the Thessalonians in the persecution which they had suffered from the time of his departure from them. He also treats of the resurrection of the dead and of the coming of the day of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians.

The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians was also written from Corinth, shortly after the first (A.D. 52), to rectify the erroneous impression caused by his former letter on
2 Thessalonians. the subject of the Lord's speedy return, which was to be preceded by signs and wonders. He writes, too, to console them under the troubles that oppressed them; but, finding that certain indolent characters, whom he had previously reprimanded, were in no ways corrected, he chides them still more severely in this letter.

The First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy was the first Epistle, following his Epistles to the Churches, addressed to particular persons. When it was written is uncertain, but
1 Timothy. probably about A.D. 66, shortly before his death; but where is still more uncertain, the more general opinion being that it was written from Macedonia. As we have already seen, Timothy had been ordained Bishop, and permanently established at Ephesus. Paul wrote to instruct him in the duties of a Bishop, both in respect to himself and to those committed to his care. He mentions the chief heresies which were then working mischief in Ephesus, and gives Timothy regulations and instructions for different states of persons in the Church—instructions which were probably intended for the use of Bishops of every age. He ought to be well informed of the good morals of those on whom he was to impose hands: "Impose not hands lightly on any man."

The Second Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy was probably the last of his writings, and was written at the time of his last imprisonment at Rome, not long before his martyrdom. The
2 Timothy. main design and subject of this Epistle was much the same as the former. Convinced that the time of his departure is at hand, he tells Timothy of his approaching death, and begs him to come to him with all speed.

St. Paul's Epistle to Titus was written on his journey to Nicopolis, A.D. 67. The design of this Epistle was
Titus. generally the same as that of those to Timothy. He had made Titus Bishop of Crete, where he left him to finish the work which he himself had begun. He exhorts him to hold to strictness of discipline, but to season strictness with lenity.

St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon was written during his first imprisonment at Rome, A.D. 61. Philemon had been converted either by St. Paul when he was preaching at Ephesus
Philemon. or by his disciple, Epaphras. Onesimus, the slave of Philemon, after defrauding his master, fled to Rome, where Paul was being detained in prison. Paul received the fugitive charitably, and persuaded him to return to Ephesus, giving him a letter to his master, in which he reminds Philemon that Onesimus is no longer his servant only, but his brother in Christ. The letter is remarkable for its grace and tenderness, and is a masterpiece of eloquence.

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews is generally believed to have been written from Rome in A.D. 63, towards the end of his imprisonment, to the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem and in Palestine. The Catholic Church has received this Epistle, and declared it to be part of the Canonical Scriptures of the New Testament, although many who received it in the first ages doubted whether it was written by St. Paul. The main design in the Epistle is to show that everyone's justification and salvation can be hoped for only by the grace and merits of Christ, and not from the Law of Moses. To the Galatians Paul shows that true justice cannot be had from *circumcision and the ceremonies of the Law;* to the Romans that even *the moral precepts and works of the Law* were insufficient without the grace of Christ; and in this Epistle to the Hebrews he shows that justice cannot be had from the *sacrifices of the Old Law.* He exhorts the Hebrews to the faith of Christ by showing that His dignity and pre-eminence surpasses that of the angels and of Moses, and that His Priesthood is above that of Aaron. He points out the various duties of Christians in regard to the necessity of faith and the practice of a holy life, and shows not only the Divinity of Christ, but also that His death was a true and real sacrifice of atonement for the sins of mankind.

Hebrews.

The Seven Catholic Epistles.

Five of these Epistles—viz., that of St. James, the Second of St. Peter, the Second and Third of St. John, that of St. Jude, as also the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse or Revelation of St. John—were not received always and everywhere in the first three ages till the Canon of Scripture was definitely determined by the authority of the Catholic Church, the supreme judge of all controversies in matters of faith and religion.

The Epistle of St. James the Apostle was the first of the seven General or Catholic Epistles, and was written from Jerusalem—some maintain as early as A.D. 45, and others as late as 62—by St. James the Less, Bishop of Jerusalem, one of the Apostles, called the brother of our Lord. He points out that faith without good works will not save a man; exhorts all to patience; condemns the vices of the tongue; gives admonitions against pride, vanity, and ambition; enforces the necessity of resisting disorderly lusts and desires; and speaks of the sacrament of anointing the sick with oil, of the confession of sins, and of fervour in prayer.

St. James.

The First Epistle of St. Peter the Apostle was always received in the Church as canonical, and was written from Rome, which he figuratively calls Babylon. Its date is very uncertain. It was directed to the converted Jews and Gentiles dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Lower Asia, and Bithynia, and was designed to confirm the new converts in the Christian faith. The Apostle commands submission to rulers

1 St. Peter.

and superiors, and exhorts all to the practice of a virtuous life in imitation of Christ.

The Second Epistle of St. Peter the Apostle, though not at first accepted as canonical, was soon received into the Canon. It seems to have been written from Rome about the year 66 or 67, a little before his martyrdom, as we gather from the first chapter: "Being assured that the putting off of this my tabernacle is at hand, even according as our Lord Jesus Christ hath signified to me." He admonishes the faithful to join all other virtues with their faith; describes the dissolution of the world by fire and the day of judgment; and cautions them against teachers of false doctrines, particularly against the Simonites.

2 St. Peter.

The First Epistle of St. John the Apostle, as many are of opinion, was written from Ephesus to accompany his Gospel, and was therefore written about the same time, and had the same readers. It was received and acknowledged by all the early Fathers as the production of St. John, and has always been accepted as canonical. It confirms the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and sets forth the mystery of the Incarnation against Cerinthus, who denied Christ's Divinity, as also against Basilides, who denied that Christ had a true body. It contains sentiments characteristic of the beloved disciple of Christ, exhorting all to the love of God and to charity towards their neighbours.

1 St. John.

The Second Epistle of St. John the Apostle, together with the Third, was not at first received by all the Churches as canonical. Though the time and the place at which the Epistle was written are uncertain, many regard it as emanating from Ephesus. The first part of the Epistle is a congratulation to the lady whom he styles "Electa" on the faith and virtue he had discovered in some of her children; while the object of the second part is to put her and her children on their guard against the errors of Simon, of Cerinthus, of the Gnostics, and of Basilides, who by their insidious doctrines would draw them from the faith of Christ.

2 St. John.

The Third Epistle of St. John the Apostle is also supposed to have been written from Ephesus shortly after the other two. In it he commends one Gaius for his faith, charity, and hospitality towards strangers and the ministers of the Gospel.

3 St. John.

The Epistle of St. Jude the Apostle was not everywhere received as canonical till about the end of the fourth century, but its genuineness among those by whom it was known was never doubted. St. Jude was the brother of St. James, who wrote the Epistle so named. The time when the Epistle was written is uncertain, but its design was to give all Christians a horror of the doctrines and practices of the Simonites, Nicolaites, and such as, having the name of Christians, had become a scandal to religion.

St. Jude.

The Apocalypse or the Revelation of St. John the Apostle was by most of the ancient Fathers acknowledged to be part of the Canon, and to have been written by that Apostle; yet in the first ages some doubted whether it was canonical and who was the author of it. It was written in Greek to the Churches in Asia about the year 96 or 97, long after the destruction of Jerusalem, when St. John was banished to the island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea. It is by some called the prophecy of the New Testament. In the first, second, and third chapters of this book are contained instructions and admonitions which St. John was commanded to write to the seven Bishops of the Churches in Asia. Many of the Fathers think that most things set down from the fourth chapter to the end will not be fulfilled till a little before the end of the world; while others are of opinion that a great part of them, and particularly the fall of the wicked Babylon, happened at the downfall of paganism by the destruction of heathen Rome and its persecuting heathen Emperors. Others, again, believe that St. John's design was in a mystical way to represent the attempts and persecutions of the wicked against the servants of God; the punishment that should in a short time fall upon Babylon—that is, upon the wicked in general; the eternal happiness and reward which God had reserved for the pious inhabitants of Jerusalem—namely, his faithful servants—after the short trials and tribulations of this mortal life. The Apocalypse, St. Jerome remarks, contains mysteries in every word. It is the last in order of the sacred writings, and contains in twenty-two chapters revelations, as the name "Apocalypse" implies, extremely obscure, yet undoubtedly of the utmost importance to the Christian Church.

The Apocalypse.

APPENDIX B

THE EVANGELISTS

St. Matthew.

Scripture itself does not furnish us with a complete list of the books or writings that are to be received as true and canonical Scriptures. It is only by the channel of tradition, and by the testimony and authority of the Catholic Church, that we know and believe that the Gospels and the other books of the Old or the New Testament are of Divine authority, or written by Divine inspiration.

St. Matthew, the author of the Gospel which bears his name, was a Galilean, the son of Alpheus; and before his conversion, which happened at the end of the first year of Christ's public ministry, was known by the name of Levi. Being a publican, or tax-gatherer, he was one day sitting at the receipt of custom, when our Lord called

him to be His disciple, and immediately he rose up and followed Him. In all the lists of the Apostles his name appears as Matthew.

Before his departure from Judaea to preach the Gospel to distant countries, he yielded to the solicitations of the faithful, and, most probably between the years 41 and 42 A.D., began to write his Gospel. He is believed to have preached in Ethiopia, and to have ended his days by martyrdom.

His Gospel seems to have been written mainly for the Jewish converts in Palestine, and was probably written in Hebrew, or rather Syro-Chaldaic, although many argue for a Greek original. The emblem of St. Matthew is that of a *man*, because he speaks so much of the humanity of Christ.

St. Mark.

St. Mark is generally identified with the John Mark of the *Acts*, John being his Jewish name, and Mark his Latin surname. His mother was Mary, the sister of Barnabas ; and it was her house at Jerusalem in which the disciples were wont to assemble, and to which St. Peter proceeded after his miraculous deliverance from prison.

We read in the *Acts* of St. Mark's estrangement from St. Paul and of his subsequent reconciliation with him, and of his being with that Apostle during his imprisonment in Rome. Many believe that he was converted by St. Peter, who in one of his Epistles styled him his son : "The Church which is in Babylon [Rome], elected together, saluteth you ; and so doth my son Mark" (1 Pet. v. 13). Tradition makes him the companion of St. Peter in Rome, whence he was sent by the Prince of the Apostles on a mission to Egypt. There he founded the Church of Alexandria, at that time considered the second city of the world, and became its first Bishop. He is said to have been martyred at Alexandria, A.D. 68, in the fourteenth year of the reign of Nero.

St. Augustine calls him the abridger of St. Matthew, while St. Irenaeus styles him the disciple and interpreter of St. Peter. His Gospel was originally written in Greek, and not in Latin ; for though written at the request of the Romans, the Greek language was commonly understood among them. It was intended mainly for the Gentile converts, and especially for those of the Roman world. It is believed by many to have been written after the martyrdom of St. Peter (A.D. 67), although weight of argument and tradition assign its writing to a much earlier date (42-44), at Rome, in the lifetime of St. Peter. St. Clement of Alexandria states that St. Mark wrote during the lifetime of St. Peter, but without the aid of St. Peter, who first approved of the writing after the Spirit of God had spoken.

St. Mark relates the same facts as St. Matthew, and often in the same words, but adds several particular circumstances, and changes the order of the narrative, in which he agrees with St. Luke and St. John. The facts peculiar to his Gospel are : (1) The parable

of the seed that groweth secretly (iv. 26-29); (2) the miracle of the healing of the deaf and dumb man (vii. 31-37); (3) the cure of the blind man at Bethsaida (viii. 22-26). In his narrative he is concise, and writes with a pleasing simplicity and elegance, while his descriptions are remarkable for their force and vividness, and for their minuteness of detail. The emblem by which St. Mark is known is that of a *lion*, because his Gospel opens with the history of the Baptist in the wilderness.

St. Luke.

St. Luke, the author of the third Gospel, as well as of the Acts of the Apostles, was a native of Antioch in Syria, and was probably a Gentile convert. He became the companion of St. Paul in several of his Apostolic missions, and is styled by him the beloved physician, and his fellow-labourer.

He was not an eye-witness of our Lord's life, nor did he learn his Gospel from St. Paul only, but from the other Apostles also; as he himself informs us in the beginning of his Gospel, he wrote what he had learned from those "who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word." It was ordained, remarks St. Augustine, by a wonderful disposition of Providence, that two of the Evangelists should be men who, unlike St. Matthew and St. John, had not seen the things which they relate, so that we might learn to submit our understanding in obedience to Divine faith, whether communicated by an Apostle, or by the disciple of an Apostle. The *Acts* he wrote from his own observation.

St. Luke's Gospel is characterised by its universality. In giving the genealogy of our Saviour he does not begin from Abraham, as does St. Matthew, but traces it to Adam, so as to connect Him, not merely with the Jews, but with the whole human race. It seems to have been especially designed for the Gentiles, and to counteract the fabulous relations concerning our Saviour which several persons had endeavoured to palm upon the world. He chiefly insists upon what relates to Christ's priestly office, for which reason the ancients gave him, of the four symbolical representations mentioned in Ezechiel, that of the *ox*, an emblem of sacrifice, and hence significant of the priestly character.

Both the Gospel and the *Acts* were originally written in Greek, which language St. Luke wrote with great purity and elegance. It seems most probable that the Gospel was written before A.D. 63, at Rome, while St. Paul was imprisoned there, and that he completed the *Acts* towards the end of St. Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 63, seeing that the work ends abruptly without any reference to the result of the Apostle's appeal to Caesar. The Gospel and the *Acts* are but two parts of one work.

St. Luke is said to have lived a life of celibacy, and to have received the martyr's crown at the age of eighty-four, at Eloea, in Peloponnesus.

St. John.

St. John, the brother of James the Greater, was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and a native of Bethsaida in Galilee. His mother was one of those women who ministered to our Lord of their substance, and who brought sweet spices and ointments with which to anoint Him after His death. He seems to have been originally a disciple of St. John the Baptist, and to have followed our Lord from the very commencement of His public ministry; but he received a personal call on the occasion when he and his brother James were sitting with their father in the ship, mending their nets on the Sea of Galilee.

Our Lord surnamed the two brothers "Boanerges," or the Sons of Thunder. John, together with Peter and James, was singled out by our Lord from among the rest, to be a witness of His Transfiguration, of His agony in the garden, and of the raising to life of the daughter of Jairus; and was one of those who, St. Paul says, "seemed to be pillars" (Gal. ii. 9). The Fathers teach that he was never married, and that it was his virginal purity that merited for him the title of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and won for him the inestimable privilege of resting his head on the bosom of our Lord at the Last Supper, and of being chosen as the guardian of the Virgin Mother of God.

Tradition informs us that from Ephesus he was summoned to Rome, and condemned by the Emperor Domitian to be cast into a caldron of boiling oil, but, coming out fresh and unhurt, was banished to the island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea, where he wrote the Apocalypse, and, according to some, his Gospel. It was while he was in Patmos that he beheld the visions described in the Apocalypse. On the death of Domitian, A.D. 96, he returned to Ephesus. Many writers are of opinion that his Gospel was written about A.D. 98, after his return to Ephesus, while others assign a much earlier date, affirming that it was written at Ephesus, about A.D. 78, before he was exiled to Patmos.

We are told that, when he was very old, and had to be carried to the assemblies of the faithful, his one exhortation was, "Little children, love one another," and that, when asked why he so often repeated this counsel, he answered: "It is the Lord's command; and whoso fulfils it has done all he need." He died at the extreme old age of one hundred and one.

In his Gospel, which was written in Greek, he omits very many leading facts and circumstances mentioned by the other three Evangelists, supposing his readers sufficiently well instructed in points which his silence approved, since it is universally agreed that he had seen, and approved of, the other three Gospels.

He wrote at the request of the Bishops of Lesser Asia against the Cerinthians, and those heretics who pretended that Jesus was a mere man and had no being before the time of His Incarnation; and probably also to supplement the other Gospels. The three Epistles of St. John have already been referred to.

St. John is justly compared to the *eagle*, rising as he does above all worldly objects up to the very throne of God. He began by establishing the Divinity of God's Eternal Son, and setting forth the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and the equality of the three Divine Persons, judging this to be the necessary beginning of the Gospel. From this he goes on to speak of the Incarnation. By the Fathers, St. John is styled the *Theologian*.

APPENDIX C

CANON OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Tradition.

There is not one book in the Canon, or list of the genuine books of Holy Scripture, that has not been acknowledged authentic by most of the ancient Churches. Six of the Epistles—those of St. James, the second of St. Peter, the second and third of St. John, St. Jude's, and the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, as well as the Apocalypse, are sometimes called Deutero-Canonical, owing to their history; but the Church has declared that they are equally inspired, and have the same authority as the other—the Proto-Canonical—books of the Bible. We cannot tell the year in which the Canon of the New Testament was formed, but we find it clearly marked as far back as the second age of the Church, though it was not universally received in its present form till after the fourth century. Eusebius informs us that the Bishops of Asia presented to St. John the Gospels of the three Evangelists who had written before him, which were then public, and universally known. St. John received them, and approved of them, and, to supply what was wanting in them, wrote his own, in which he mentions what Jesus Christ did at the commencement of His preaching, and what had been omitted by the other Evangelists.

Tertullian appeals to the Gospel, "which from the beginning has been given by the Apostles, and which is preserved as a sacred deposit in the Apostolic Churches."

We have, then, from the end of the first, and from the beginning of the second age, and in the third, the Canon of the four Gospels received, acknowledged, and authorised in the Church. This Canon was made, not in a solemn assembly, nor in a council, but by the consent of the Churches, and by the judgment of those Bishops especially who had seen and known the Apostles or their disciples.

The Epistles of the Apostles are not less authentic, and were collected about the same period as the four Gospels. St. Ignatius, writing to the Philadelphians, clearly marks the Gospels, the

Apostles, and the Prophets, as composing the whole code of Scripture: "Let us have recourse to the Gospel as to the flesh of Jesus Christ, and to all His Apostles, looking upon the Epistles of these holy men as the ecclesiastical Senate; let us also love and esteem the Prophets (or the books of the Old Testament)." Tertullian, moreover, tells us that in his time the originals of the Epistles were preserved.

Tradition.

Tradition, as interpreted by the Church, must be admitted, to inform us what is authentic Scripture; and an *infallible Church authority,* to inform us what is the genuine interpretation of the genuine text. Without the assistance of Apostolical tradition and Church authority, could any seeker rest secure that he properly understood the disputed points of Holy Writ? that his, and no other interpretation, was the genuine sense of these mysterious words, when he was informed that by far the greater part of learned societies and learned individuals gave a widely different interpretation to the same text? The freedom of expounding Scripture by unassisted reason and private spirit was the first germ of the daily increasing spread of sects and heresies, the ruinous effects of which can only be prevented by a speedy return to first principles, *Apostolical tradition,* and *Church authority.*

Private judgment.

As men's judgments and their private interpretations are different, so in a great measure are the articles of their creed and belief. The Scriptures, in which are contained the revealed mysteries of Divine faith, are the most excellent of all writings. They were written by men inspired by God, and therefore contain not the words of men, but the word of God, "which can save our souls" (Jas. i. 21). Then must they be read, even by the learned, in the spirit of humility, with the fear of mistaking the true sense, as so many have done; and with a due submission to the Catholic Church, which Christ Himself commanded us *to hear* and obey. This we might learn from the Scripture itself. St. Paul told the Corinthians that, even in those days, there were many who corrupted and *adulterated the word of God* (2 Cor. ii. 17). St. Peter gives us this admonition, that in the Epistles of St. Paul "are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction" (2 Pet. iii. 16); and St. Paul says: "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath placed you Bishops, to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx. 28). Moreover, from the Acts of the Apostles (xv.) we learn that, as soon as a doubt or dispute was raised as to whether the Gentiles converted by St. Paul were bound by any of the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, this first controversy about religion was not decided by the private judgment, or private spirit, even of those Apostolical preachers, but by an assembly of the Apostles and Bishops held at Jerusalem, as appears from the letter of the Council sent to the Christians at Antioch: "It hath

seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," whom Christ promised to direct by the *Spirit of truth*, and with whom, He assures us, He will remain *to the end of the world*.

The very same method, as is evident from the annals of Church history, has been practised to this day, and will be practised to the end of time. It is the rule grounded on the command and promises of Christ when He founded and established His Church. The ignorant fall into errors for want of knowledge, and the learned are often blinded by pride and self-conceit. The sublime and profound mysteries, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son of God, the manner of Christ's presence in the Holy Sacrament, are certainly above the reach of man's weak reason and capacity; much less are they the object of our senses, which are so often deceived. We ought to remember those words of Isaias: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are My ways exalted above your ways, and My thoughts above your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 8, 9). How, then, shall anyone, by his private reason, pretend to judge, to know, to demonstrate, what is possible or impossible to the incomprehensible power of God? Every man's private judgment, when, with an air of confidence, he says *I know it*, must pass for infallible; though he will not hear of the Catholic Church's being infallible, under the promise of our Saviour Jesus Christ Himself. Let us acknowledge with St. Gregory Nazianzen that, if we know not the things under our feet, we must not pretend to fathom the profound mysteries of God.

APPENDIX D

JEWISH SECTS AND ORDERS

The three great religious sects we find mentioned among the Jews were the **Pharisees**, the **Sadducees**, and the **Essenes**, which seem to have sprung into being in the age subsequent to the Captivity, though the precise date of their origin cannot be determined. Josephus, writing of them, says: "At this time there were three sects among the Jews, who had different opinions concerning human actions: the one was called the sect of the *Pharisees*, another the sect of the *Sadducees*, and the other the sect of the *Essenes*. Now, for the Pharisees, they say that some actions, but not all, are the work of fate, and some of them are in our own power, and that they are liable to fate, but are not caused by fate. But the sect of the Essenes affirm that fate governs all things, and that nothing befalls men but what is according to its determination. And for the Sadducees, they take away fate, and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal; but they

uppose that all our actions are in our power, so that we are ourselves the causes of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly" ("Antiq.," XIII., v. 9). Only the two sects of Pharisees and Sadducees are mentioned in the New Testament.

The Pharisees. The Pharisees (Heb. *parash*, to separate) boasted of being separated from other men by their strict observance of the rites and ceremonies of the Law, and considered themselves more righteous than the other Jews. On account of their strictness they were held in great esteem by the people.

The great principle of the Pharisees was, that besides the *written Law* there was an *oral law*, which completed and explained the written Law, and for which they claimed an equal authority with the Law. These traditions of the elders, many of which related to the trivial affairs of daily life and to every detail of worship, formed a most elaborate system. Thus, *formalism* was by them substituted for spiritual worship. Ceremonial observances, instead of being regarded as a means to an end, were held to be of the utmost importance. The Pharisees affected long prayers, which they recited publicly at the street corners at the customary hours; and adopted many peculiarities in their dress, wearing long robes with fringe and tassels, and having their phylacteries* broader than those of the other Jews. "All their works they do to be seen of men: for they make their phylacteries broad and enlarge their fringes" (Matt. xxiii. 5). "Well did Isaias prophecy of you, hypocrites, as it is written: This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain do they worship Me, teaching doctrines and precepts of men. . . . Well do you make void the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition" (Mark vii.).

Other points to be noted in connection with the Pharisees are their scrupulous observance of certain ordinances relating to things clean and unclean, and their devotion to the minute regulations that were laid down for their guidance. "And when they had seen some of His disciples eat bread with common, that is, with unwashed, hands, they found fault: for the Pharisees, and all the Jews, eat not without often washing their hands, holding the tradition of the ancients. . . . And many other things there are that have been delivered to them to observe, the washing of cups, and of pots, and of brazen vessels, and of beds" (Mark vii.). Our Lord severely reprehends their hypocrisy and other vices, and, because of the inconsistency of their lives with their teaching, utters the bitterest denunciations against them: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish; but within you are full of extortion and uncleanness." And again: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut the kingdom of heaven

* These were long bands of parchment covered with sacred texts, which the Jews were accustomed to fasten on their foreheads or their arms to remind them of their duty.

against men; for you go not in yourselves, and those that are going in, you suffer not to enter" (Matt. xxiii.). Their intolerable pride and self-sufficiency is seen in the case of the Pharisee who indulges his vanity in extolling himself over the poor publican: "O God, I give Thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, nor such as this publican. I fast twice in the week: I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke xviii. 11, 12).

The doctrines and traditions of the Pharisees were not committed to writing till the second century of the Christian era, when they were collected in a book called the "Mishna." Here we learn that Moses received the unwritten Law on Sinai, and delivered it to Josue, and Josue to the elders, and the elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets to the men of the great Synagogue. Yet we must not suppose that all the traditions which bound the Pharisees were believed to be direct revelations to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Nor would it be reasonable to charge the whole body of Pharisees with hypocrisy. That there were among them those who were a disgrace to their party none knew better than themselves. Originally their chief tendency had been to resist all foreign influences, chiefly Greek, that threatened to undermine the sacred religion of their fathers, and even at the time of Christ they stood as the national party in politics and religion. They paid most scrupulously all the tithes and taxes enjoined by the Law; they held, as we have seen, certain great doctrines, such as the immortality of the soul and the resurrection; whilst their strictness on points of religious observance served as an antidote to the prevailing laxity. And though their rigid observance of small points often led them to hypocrisy and self-glorification, this body contained many pious, learned, and patriotic men of progress.

The Sadducees. The Sadducees (*sedacha*, righteousness), in opposition to the Pharisees, repudiated the *oral law*, denied the resurrection of the dead, and disbelieved in the existence of angels or spirits. "The same day the Sadducees came to Him, who say there is no resurrection" (Matt. xxii. 23). "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both" (Acts xxiii. 8). Holding, as they did, the Pentateuch as the most important of the Canonical books, it is hard to see how they reconciled their disbelief in angel or spirit with the literal interpretation of the writings of Moses, since in them, as well as in other books of the Old Testament, angels are so often and so distinctly mentioned. "The two principal explanations which have been suggested are, either that the Sadducees regarded the angels of the Old Testament as transitory, unsubstantial representations of Jehovah, or that they disbelieved, not in the angels of the Old Testament, but merely in the angelical system, which had become developed in the popular belief of the Jews after their return from the Babylonian captivity."*

* Smith's "New Testament History," p. 143.

The opinions of the Sadducees, who were not a numerous sect, appear to have prevailed chiefly among the upper classes. In the days of the Apostles we even find the High Priest and his party included in their number, as we gather from the Acts (iv. 1, 2).

The Essenes, the origin of whose name is uncertain, are not mentioned in the New Testament, but were a sect remarkable for their strictness, self-denial, temperance, and labour.

The Essenes. Josephus tells us that they numbered some four thousand men, and that they neither married nor kept servants, but ministered to one another. They aspired after an ideal purity and Divine communication, to attain which they separated themselves from their brethren; and although some dwelt in cities, the greater number retired into a kind of monastic retreat, chiefly in the desert region lying to the west of the Dead Sea.

They abstained from wine and meat, and held all things in common, one man possessing no more than another. Among them was no appearance of poverty or excess of riches; and if any of their sect chanced to visit them, they welcomed him as one of their own, even though they had never known him before. They kept neither flocks nor herds, but devoted themselves to agriculture.

Although, as we have seen, celibacy was practised by the Essenes generally, we still find among them a certain order, less strict, allowing marriage. They despised the body, but held the immortality of the soul without a resurrection of the body.

The Scribes, though they did not form a sect, are mentioned here on account of their close connection with the Pharisees.

Scribes, or Lawyers. As it was the function of the Sanhedrim to interpret the Law, and to judge the more important cases, it became at one and the same time "the Parliament, the High Court of Justice, and the supreme resort of instruction in Judaea," while it was the duty of the Scribes to assist the Sanhedrim. As Doctors and interpreters of the Law, the Scribes possessed a great influence over the people. By degrees they assumed the office of public teachers; and, since they were expounders both of the oral and the written Law, we find them frequently named in conjunction with the Pharisees, who were the great upholders of tradition. They taught, too, in the synagogues; whence St. Matthew, comparing our Saviour's teaching with theirs, tells us: "When Jesus had fully ended these words, the people were in admiration at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having power, and not as the Scribes and the Pharisees" (Matt. vii. 29).

The Herodians, a political party rather than a religious sect, pursued the policy of the Herods, from whom they derived their name. They paid court to the reigning family with a

The Herodians. view to their own position and wealth; and making expediency their motto, they relied on the protection of Rome as a necessary step to the securing of their own independence. They were looked upon as the antinational party, and

were bitterly opposed by the Pharisees, whose greatest pride was that they were Jews first and last.

The Zealots.

The Zealots form what Josephus styles the fourth of the philosophical sects among the Jews. They formed the extreme national party, and acknowledged no Lord except Jehovah, being to Pharisaism politically what the Essenes were religiously. They displayed the greatest zeal for the Law; while, in striving for political independence, they spared not even their nearest relations, but struck down without mercy all such as held moderate views, or such as were willing, for the sake of peace, to make the slightest concessions to their rulers. They welcomed death, if need were, in support of their convictions. They deemed it disgraceful to pay tribute to Rome, and stoutly refused to pay taxes of any description to a foreign Power.

The Sicarii.

The Sicarii, or the Assassins, were an association or secret society of bandits, which grew out of the most fanatical of the Zealots. Fierce and vindictive, they carried a small poniard (*sica*) in the folds of their dress, and, appearing in Jerusalem at the festival times, and mingling with the crowd, they secretly dispatched those whom they judged the enemies of their God and country, and, by disappearing in the throng, generally escaped detection. "The first man," says Josephus, "who was slain by them was Jonathan, the High Priest (A.D. 57), after whose death many were slain every day, while the fear men were in of being so served was more afflicting than the calamity itself; and while everybody expected death every hour, as men do in war, so men were obliged to look before them, and to take notice of their enemies at a great distance; nor, if their friends were coming to them, durst they trust them any longer; but, in the midst of their suspicions and guarding of themselves, they were slain. Such was the celerity of the plotters against them, and so cunning was their contrivance" ("Wars," II., xiii. 3).

APPENDIX E

ROMAN EMPERORS AND GOVERNORS OF JUDAEA

	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
B.C. 27	Octavian receives from the Senate the title of AUGUSTUS; reigns till A.D. 14.	
4		**Death of Herod the Great.** A little before his death, being informed by the Magi of their errand, he began to consider the new-born King of the Jews a dangerous rival, and devised and carried out the cruel plan of massacring the male children of Bethlehem, hoping thus to remove once for all the threatened danger. Soon after this he gave orders for his eldest son, Antipater, to be put to death. Having also caused the chief men of the nation to be assembled at Jericho and shut up in the hippodrome, he bade his sister Salome have them slain as soon as the breath had quitted his body, "that he might have the honour of a memorable mourning at his funeral"; but his inhuman command was not carried out. He died of a loathsome disease March 28, 4 B.C., leaving his kingdom to be divided among his three youngest sons, *Archelaus, Herod Antipas,* and *Philip.* ARCHELAUS was appointed *Ethnarch* of Judaea, Samaria, and Idumaea; HEROD ANTIPAS *Tetrarch* of Peraea and Galilee; and PHILIP *Tetrarch* of Batanaea, Trachonitis, Gaulonitis, and Ituraea.
A.D. 6		Archelaus deposed and banished to Vienne; JUDAEA MADE A ROMAN PROVINCE. Judaea was annexed to the province of Syria, and placed under Roman Procurators* resident at Caesarea. **Coponius** was the first Procurator.

* Although we sometimes find the term Governor used as synonymous with Procurator (*e.g.*, Matt. xxvii. 2; Acts xxx. 26), yet the two are distinct. A Procurator acted under the Governor of a province as collector of the revenue, and was judge only in causes connected therewith. In a small territory, the Procurator was sometimes head of the administration, though responsible to the Governor of the neighbouring province.

A.D.	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
		When Judaea was annexed to Syria, *Quirinus* (Cyrenius), the Legatus of Syria, made a taxing-census of the Ethnarchy. At Jerusalem, owing to the persuasion of Joazar, the High Priest, the enrolment was allowed to proceed without much opposition, but caused a revolt of the Zealots, headed by Judas of Galilee, who asserted that the taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty. The Zealots, however, were defeated, and Judas was slain in battle. Quirinus made Annas High Priest.
10		**Marcus Ambivius**, Procurator.
12		**Annius Rufus**, Procurator.
14	TIBERIUS, Emperor, A.D. 14-37.	**Valerius Gratus**, Procurator.
26		**Pontius Pilate**, fifth Procurator of Judaea. Soon after his appointment as Procurator, Pilate exasperated the Jews by introducing into Jerusalem the Roman standards, the images of the Emperor, and the Roman eagles; "whereas," says Josephus, "our law forbids us the very making of images, on which account the former Procurators were wont to make their entry into the city with such ensigns as had not these ornaments" ("Antiq.," XVIII., iii. 1). The Jews crowded to Caesarea, where Pilate was then residing, and besought him to remove the obnoxious images. For five days and nights they remained before the palace-gate, when Pilate gave orders to his soldiers to slay them if they persisted in their refusal to depart. But, finding that they preferred to die rather than yield, he at length relented, and the standards were transferred to Caesarea. He further enraged the Jews by employing the sacred revenues for building an aqueduct.
36		Such acts of tyranny he continued till, in A.D. 36, he was summoned for trial to Rome, where he arrived just after the death of Tiberius. He was ultimately dismissed from office by Caligula, and banished to Vienne, some six years after he had condemned our Lord to death.

A.D.	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
		For the reference of Josephus to our Lord's condemnation by Pilate, see note, p. 269. The Roman historian Tacitus, in his "Annals," Book XV., writes: "The author of this name [*Christians*] was *Christ*, who in the reign of Tiberius was brought to punishment by Pontius Pilate, the Procurator."
		When Herod Philip died, in A.D. 33, his tetrarchy was annexed to the Roman province of Syria. No Procurator was appointed during the disorders which followed immediately on the death of Tiberius.
37	Caligula, Emperor, A.D. 37-41.	
38		**Marcellus**, Procurator.
39		The mad act of Caligula, ordering his statue to be set up in the Temple, caused great commotions among the people.
		Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Peraea and Galilee, the Prince who married his brother Philip's divorced wife, and who beheaded John the Baptist, was banished by Caligula, and died at Lyons, whither Herodias had accompanied him.
40		**Herod Agrippa I.**, grandson of Herod the Great, who had been cast into prison by Tiberius, where he remained till the accession of Caligula, was now invested with the tetrarchy of his uncle Philip, and was accorded the title of King. The dominions of Herod Antipas (Peraea and Galilee) were also given him when that Prince was sent into exile; and shortly after, having obtained Judaea and Samaria, he ruled all the territories which had owned the sway of Herod the Great.
41	Claudius, Emperor, A.D. 41-54.	
44		Herod Agrippa I., after accepting the adulation of the envoys from Tyre and Sidon, saluting him as a god, was smitten with a terrible disease, and died at Caesarea.
		Judaea again becomes a Roman Province governed by Procurators.

	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
A.D.		
44		**Cuspius Fadus**, Procurator.
46		**Tiberius Alexander**, Procurator.
48		**Cumanus**, Procurator.
50		**Herod Agrippa II.**, the son of Herod Agrippa I., was at Rome when his father died, and as he was but seventeen years of age, he was not allowed to succeed him immediately. His kingdom was placed under Procurators. Later he was made King of Chalcis, which he soon afterwards exchanged for the Tetrarchies of Ituraea and Abilina. The Tetrarchy of Trachonitis was subsequently bestowed upon him; yet, although he was honoured with the title of King, his power was little more than nominal, while Judaea never came under his sway. He, however, obtained the superintendency of the Temple and the sacred treasury, together with the power of appointing the High Priest.
52		**Claudius Felix**, Procurator.
54	NERO, Emperor, A.D. 54-68.	Revolt of the Sicarii.
57		Jonathan, the High Priest, murdered by the Sicarii while offering sacrifice in the Temple.
		At this time great excitement prevailed among the Jews, not only in Jerusalem, but throughout the whole country; and the severe and cruel measures taken by Felix served but to infuriate them further and to hasten on their ruin. He exerted his cruelty on all whom either his avarice or resentment had marked out for destruction. We have already seen how, in the hope of extorting money, he detained St. Paul in prison for two years. He reached the crowning point of his cruelty in the massacre of the Jews at Caesarea during one of their numerous conflicts with the foreigners, whom he openly supported against them. For this he was denounced to Nero and recalled.
60		**Portius Festus**, Procurator.
		He repressed with a strong hand the disorders which now filled the country, and even the Temple, with bloodshed.

A.D.	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
61		An embassy, headed by the High Priest, was sent from Jerusalem to Rome respecting the quarrel about Agrippa's palace and the new Temple wall. Nero's answer was given in favour of the Jews, but he detained the High Priest as a hostage.
63		**Albinus**, Procurator.
64		**Gessius Florus**, the last of the Procurators. Though Albinus had been bad, Florus was the most hated of all the Procurators. His deeds of bloodshed, rapine, and oppression ultimately roused the Jewish nation to open rebellion. The Jewish war was initiated by a conflict at Caesarea, and soon began to rage with irresistible fury. It has been stated that 20,000 Jews were massacred in Caesarea, 2,000 at Ptolemais,
66		50,000 at Alexandria, and 3,000 or 4,000 in one day at Jerusalem; whilst the Jews, on their part, spared neither Syrians nor Romans, but retaliated their cruelties upon them.
67		The Jews, having defeated Cestius Gallus, the Syrian Governor, appointed Flavius Josephus, a priest, over Galilee, and left Jerusalem to the care of the High Priest Ananus, whilst to Eleazar, the leader of the Zealots, was entrusted Idumaea. When Nero was informed of these preparations, he entrusted the conduct of the war to Vespasian, who, aided by the dissensions of the Jews, slowly overran and ravaged the whole of Palestine, but did not attack Jerusalem. During the struggle for the succession in Rome, Vespasian withdrew to Caesarea.
	GALBA, OTHO, AND VITELLIUS, Emperors, A.D. 68-69.	
70	VESPASIAN, Emperor, A.D. 69-79.	Having been proclaimed Emperor, Vespasian at once returned to Rome, leaving to his son Titus the subjugation of the Jews. Titus promptly moved with all his forces, which amounted to some 80,000 men, against the doomed city of Jerusalem, which was torn

	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
A.D. 70		asunder by internal factions in deadly conflict with each other. The Jews could muster within the city 24,000 trained fighting-men, besides a multitude of irregular combatants. Although the defences of Jerusalem were remarkably strong, the defenders were hampered by the hundreds of thousands of worshippers who were assembled for the celebration of the Passover, and who were unable to leave the city; but still more were they hampered by the Jewish factions, and by the crowds of reckless men whom the reduction of Galilee and Samaria had driven to seek shelter within the walls. The Zealots, led by Eleazar, filled the city with tumult, and urged the mob to massacre the chief priests and the nobility; and when Ananus, the High Priest, and the law-abiding citizens combined in self-defence, the Zealots established themselves in the strong enclosures of the Temple. Ananus and his party were overpowered, and the extreme national party became supreme in Jerusalem. But the Zealots themselves were split into three factions, led respectively by Eleazar, John of Giscala, and Simon Bargiora. Eleazar was assassinated, while John and Simon, even in front of the common enemy, could not repress their mutual hatred Meanwhile Titus had drawn his army closely round the city, and was now encamped on the ridge of Scopus. In his attack on the outer wall he met with fierce opposition, and suffered great losses, but at length succeeded in effecting an entrance through the breaches made by his military engines. He then blockaded the second enclosure, and directed his attacks chiefly against the fortress Antonia. Even at this juncture he would have spared the sacred city, and made renewed attempts at reconciliation. Josephus, who had been made prisoner at Jotapata, was sent as the bearer of honourable terms to his countrymen, but his offers were rejected with scorn. Famine had already begun to prevail within

	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
A.D. 70		the walls, and the wretched inhabitants were reduced to the direst extreme of want and misery. Josephus tells us of a certain mother who snatched her infant son from her breast and roasted him to satisfy the cravings of hunger. After eating a portion, she had just concealed the remainder for future use when some soldiers, attracted by the scent of food, rushed into her dwelling, and threatened to kill her if she did not at once disclose where she had it concealed. When she uncovered what was left of her child, the famishing men were filled with horror, and, after standing for a moment in amazement at the inhuman sight, fled terrified from the house as though it had been plague-stricken. The minds of the people, moreover, were alarmed by the report of strange prodigies having been witnessed. A certain fanatic, as he daily traversed the streets, was heard constantly repeating the cry, "Woe to Jerusalem! Woe, woe to the city, and to the people, and to the Holy House!" till at last exclaiming, "Woe, woe to me also!" he was struck dead with a stone from a Roman catapult. Both Jew and Roman affirmed that the gates of the Temple had suddenly opened of themselves, and that a voice more than human, and as of a great multitude, was heard to exclaim, "Let us remove hence." The desperate struggle still went on; the fortress of Antonia was destroyed, and the Temple itself was now exposed to attack. John and Simon, whom pressing danger had united, retreated to the upper city. The Temple at length yielded, and was entered by the Romans. Titus would yet have saved the Holy of Holies from destruction had not a soldier, seizing a brand, fired the doors. Soon the whole building was in flames, and there was no hope of saving it. It was utterly destroyed. Again Titus sent Josephus to offer terms to the leaders, but he was driven back with curses as a renegade. Finding all his attempts at reconciliation treated

	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
A.D. 70		with scorn, Titus vowed the entire overthrow of the city. The work of destruction was at once proceeded with. Thousands were slain, while famine, more cruel than the sword, slowly but surely carried off even greater numbers. Those who still survived were sold as slaves. Even the most moderate estimate gives the number of slain and prisoners in this fatal war as 1,462,000. After the flames had consumed the Temple, Rufus, the lieutenant of Titus, drew the plough over the spot where the sacred building had stood: "Sion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall be as a heap of stones" (Mic. iii. 12). The city was desolate, and the words of our Lord were literally fulfilled: "Amen I say to you, there shall not be left here a stone upon a stone" (Matt. xxiv. 2). John and Simon were seized in their attempt to escape into the country. The former was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, while the latter was reserved to grace the conqueror's triumphal entry into Rome.
115	TRAJAN, Emperor, A.D. 98-117.	The spirit of the Jewish nation now seemed utterly broken. Many fled from Judaea into Cyprus, Cyrene, and Egypt; and in the reign of the Emperor Trajan we read of their breaking out into rebellion and slaying 500,000 Greeks and Romans. The rising was put down with great severity, as many as 600,000 Jews being slain in Egypt and Cyrene alone.
131	HADRIAN, Emperor, A.D. 117-138.	The last attempt made by the Jews to recover their country was in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian. During the sixty years that had elapsed since the time of Vespasian's conquests the Jews in Palestine had gradually increased in numbers, and now, under Akiba and Bar-Cochebas, the "Son of the Star," who had assumed the title of King and occupied Jerusalem, they broke out into a fierce insurrection. The revolt was ruthlessly put down by Julius Severus, and more than 580,000 Jews are said to have perished, while many thousands were sold into slavery. Hadrian planted a

	Emperors of Rome.	Events in Palestine.
A.D. 131		Roman colony at Jerusalem, which was rebuilt under the name of Aelia Capitolina, and on Mount Moria, on the site of the Temple, he erected a temple to Jupiter. By an imperial edict the Jews were banished from their country, and since that time have, as a people, remained dispersed among the nations of the world.
363	JULIAN, the Apostate Emperor, A.D. 361-363.	In his hatred of the Christians, and to show how he would falsify the predictions of our Lord, Julian twice gave orders for the rebuilding of the Temple. Twice, however, was the work interrupted by Divine interference. While the workmen were clearing away the ruins and digging down for the new foundations, they were suddenly interrupted and dismayed by a violent noise under their feet. The ground shook, balls of fire burst from the earth, smoke and sulphurous exhalations arose about them, and the work which they had already done was utterly destroyed. Numbers were killed, and the intention of erecting a temple had to be hopelessly abandoned. The particulars of this event come to us, not from a Christian, but from a Pagan historian.

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